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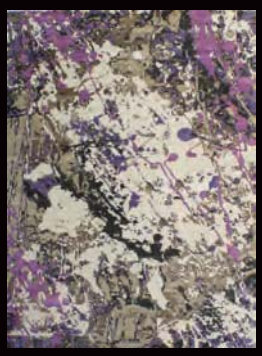

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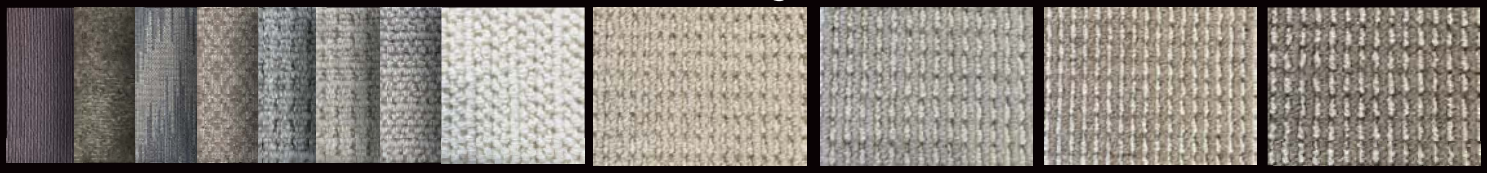

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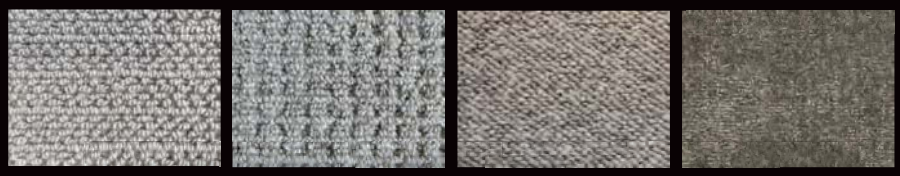

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styleathome NOVEMBER 2015

The stylishly wrapped gifts in this tabletop vignette radiate just as brightly as those under the Christmas tree.

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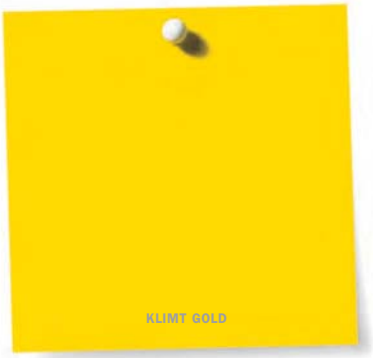
ON THE COVER
A dining table outfitted with glass vessels, twinkle lights and silver accents delights and dazzles **76**

PHOTOGRAPHY
Tracey Ayton

RALPH LAUREN PAINT



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family PLANNING

In decorating, as in life, it's important to know your strengths and weaknesses. I am great at executing an amazing makeover, for example, but when it comes to planning it all out beforehand, not so much. I am, by nature, a person who does better with a tight deadline and, consequently, less time to worry. This trait does not serve me well this time of year, since it takes lots of coordination to make the holidays stress-free. But every November I pull up my (horse-patterned) socks and plan my little heart out, and I think I've achieved some great results over the years. From the annual bash I throw the first weekend of December to the quiet New Year's Eve dinner I host for a few close friends, everything is under control. With one major exception: when my family visits from out of town.

Every Christmas Eve, my sister's SUV pulls up the drive after a six-hour trek from Montreal. My niece and nephew spill out of the back seat, and for the next five days chaos ensues. No matter how much planning I do ahead of time, family dynamics rule the upheaval of these days. It's a good thing that another one of my strengths is determination, because it means I'm hell-bent on finding a solution. Here's my plan:

1. Fill my freezer with ready-made meals. Yes, I love whipping up homemade quiche for Boxing Day lunch, but I'm going to try making a decadent macaroni and cheese a few days before that will allow me to sleep in instead.

2. Put together a basket of guest goodies. An entertainment package with books, snacks, DVDs and board games will be at hand for lazy snowy days.

3. Set the table in advance. It always surprises me how long it takes to set my holiday table the way I like it. This year, it'll be ready before everyone arrives.

Perfect, right? I'm sure *nothing* will go wrong.... Did I mention I'm also an optimist?

Erin

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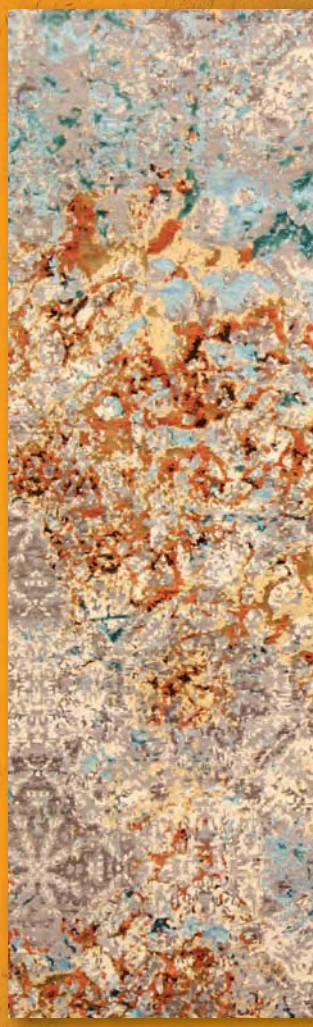

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HAPPY **PLACE**

The October 2015 issue brought all of the "Cozy Comforts of Home" to my house. From the Parisian kitchen ("French Kiss," page 56) to the stunning bathroom package ("Back to Classics," page 73), I devoured each article just as I did the autumn recipes by cookbook author Kimberley Hasselbrink ("Fresh Fast Fare," page 106). I also share editor-in-chief Erin McLaughlin's love of horses – her mare, Fleur, is beautiful. Thank you to the talented people at *Style at Home*.

STEPHANIE MCKENNA, ORANGEVILLE, ON

HIDDEN **GEM**

I only recently discovered this jewel of a magazine. We're currently updating the kitchen in our newly purchased 58-year-old bungalow. The October 2015 issue's Reno of the Month column (page 40) really caught our eyes, so much so that we posted the pages on our wall for inspiration. So far, we've adopted the grey paint colour for our kitchen cabinetry, and we love the idea of extending the cabinets to the ceiling. Another favourite column of mine is High or Low. You've found a way to have the reader focus on the details and appreciate that much can be done regardless of budget constraints. I'm hooked.

ISOBEL MENARD, OTTAWA

CULINARY **CRAVING**

During my search for decor inspiration for my new condo, the kitchens featured in *Style at Home*'s September 2015 issue were exactly what I needed to find. It's as if you read my mind! Thank you for reminding us condo dwellers that there's no need to sacrifice style in a small space. When I visit the design centre to select my finishes, I don't plan to bring anything with me – except for this issue.

GABRIELLE, VIA EMAIL

CREATIVE **MIND**

As a *Style at Home* reader, I wanted to share how much I loved the Weekend Makeovers 2015 special issue. The gold phone DIY project (page 94) really stood out and I had to give it a try (see above). Next, I'm looking forward to creating the embroidery hoop artwork featured on page 40. Thanks for the wonderful inspiration.

ANNABELLE METAYER, MONTREAL

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The writer of our favourite letter next issue will win Grohe's Essence **SINGLE-HANDLE BATHROOM FAUCET** in a sleek chrome finish. The best part? Its clean and modern design will always be in style.

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style news

PRODUCER MORGAN LINDSAY | **TEXT** MARY LEVITSKI

Turner **CREDENZA** in Orange with hardware in Polished Brass, $4,495 US, Jonathan Adler, jonathanadler.com.

ILLUSTRATION, MICHELLE MORELAN

NOVEMBER'S MUST-HAVE: *customizable credenza*

Four high-gloss lacquer colour options. Three bold hardware finish selections. One jaw-dropping credenza just waiting for your creative stamp.

With a 134-year history, Finland-based glassware manufacturer Iittala has a breadth of designs to draw upon. Dreamed up in 1964 and resurrected in 2010, the sought-after delicately beaded Kastehelmi collection, **SO NAMED AFTER THE FINNISH WORD FOR DEW,** has expanded to include lidded jars.

Iittala Kastehelmi **GLASSWARE,** from $22 each, William Ashley China, williamashley.com.

DEW THE DISHES

OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND

OPEN STORAGE HAS A BUILT-IN DILEMMA: WHERE TO STASH ALL THE LESS-THAN-PRETTY STUFF? THIS COTTON CANVAS INKY-PRINT BIN IS ONE CHIC ANSWER.

Crawford Ink Blot Cube **BIN** in Midnight, $60, Pehr Designs, pehrdesigns.com.

A beloved DIY idea makes it into the mainstream.

DOUBLE DIP

This sleek side table is so nice we want it twice (one for each end of the sofa), and at such a reasonable price, we can afford it, too. Featuring the popular dip treatment, a DIY darling, the natural rubberwood legs peek out from underneath smart grey paint.

Canvas grey-painted MDF and rubberwood **SIDE TABLES,** $100 each, Canadian Tire, canadiantire.ca.

COME FEATHER

BECKONING WITH LIGHT TONES AND A TRANQUIL MOTIF, THE FEATHER TOSS CUSHION IS A FITTING ADDITION TO CANADIAN DESIGNER AMI MCKAY'S MIX-AND-MATCH BEDDING COLLECTION.

Ami McKay Pure Bedding 2.0 Coho polyester-filled embroidered cotton Feather **TOSS CUSHION,** $30, Bed Bath & Beyond, bedbathandbeyond.ca.

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A rose by any other name smells as sweet, but table-covering maker Chilewich gives it a welcome rock 'n' roll edge with Faded Floral. **DIGITALLY PRINTED IN DARK TONES ONTO LOOSELY WOVEN VINYL, HAND-DRAWN BLOOMS LOOK MORE LATE-NIGHT LOFT BASH THAN AFTERNOON TEA PARTY.**

Vinyl Faded Floral **PLACEMATS & RUNNER** in Blue, from $34 each, Chilewich, chilewich.com.

COMING UP ROSES

Pair this shade with a black and white cord for a graphic pop.

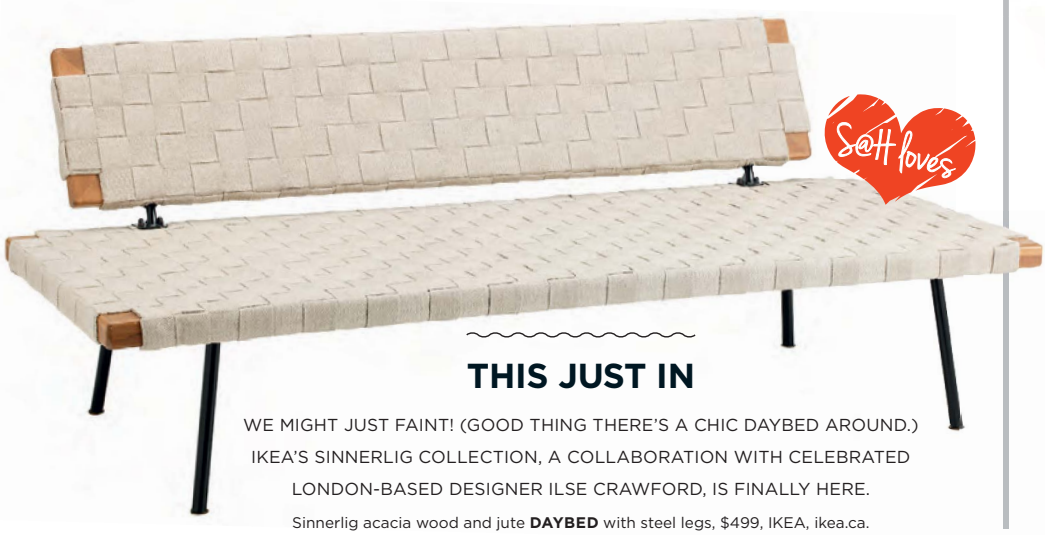
TRENDY TRADITION

The ancient art of origami comes back into fashion with these modern interpretations.

ALL ANGLES

Origami, the centuries-old Japanese paper-folding tradition, still inspires today. Its all-around appeal lives on in **PRECISE, INTRICATE, ANGULAR SILHOUETTES** like pendant light shades handmade from polypropylene sheets in Vancouver and Alessi's new metal Kaleidos bowl.

Polypropylene Ruffle **PENDANT LIGHT SHADES** in Bright White (cords not included), $70 each, Fiber Lab, fiberstore.etsy.com; Alessi epoxy-resin-coated steel Kaleidos **BOWL** in Black, $132, Bergo Designs, bergo.ca.



S@H loves

THIS JUST IN

WE MIGHT JUST FAINT! (GOOD THING THERE'S A CHIC DAYBED AROUND.) IKEA'S SINNERLIG COLLECTION, A COLLABORATION WITH CELEBRATED LONDON-BASED DESIGNER ILSE CRAWFORD, IS FINALLY HERE.

Sinnerlig acacia wood and jute **DAYBED** with steel legs, $499, IKEA, ikea.ca.

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HOW TO

take care of your christmas tree

Everything you need to know to keep your evergreen fresh and contain the inevitable mess.

PRODUCER MARY LEVITSKI

Nothing announces the holiday season quite like a fresh conifer. But, as it's often as tall as you are and prickly all over, a Christmas tree can be quite challenging to manoeuvre. Spring for the optional plastic bag for easy transport, and don't rush to pull it off. Once the tree is indoors, cut a hole in the bottom of the bag large enough to poke the trunk through, and insert it in a tree stand. Pull the bag down, flatten it around the base of the stand and conceal it with a decorative tree skirt. When you're ready to say goodbye to the holidays, carefully remove the skirt and shake the needles off outside. Then simply pull the bag back over the tree and haul it out with minimal mess.

skirt the issue

NEEDLE IN A HAYSTACK

Vacuuming tree needles out of carpeting can seem like Mission Impossible, but it doesn't have to. Sprinkle the area with baking soda to neutralize stickiness from sap. Then, target needles individually with the crevice attachment. In future, to minimize the problem, choose an extra-large tree skirt.

SAP ZAP

Remove stubborn sticky sap from carpeting and fabrics by hardening it with bagged ice and then scraping it off. For walls, wipe it away with a bit of baby oil; afterward, remove the oil with dish soap and water.

DO

Have a pro make a fresh cut at the trunk's bottom, and put the tree up right away. Keep it in constant contact with water.

DON'T

Saw the trunk at an angle or in a V shape, or drill a hole in it. These methods won't aid water uptake.

what's your type?

BEFORE HEADING OUT WITH WALLET OR AXE IN HAND, GET INFORMED ABOUT THE MOST POPULAR TREE TYPES.

Fraser fir: Known for its sturdy, well-spaced branches (ideal for ornaments) and superior needle retention, this high-end tree can be pricey.

Balsam fir: A less expensive alternative to the Fraser, it has similarly stiff branches and a nice woodsy scent.

Eastern white pine: With slender, wispy branches bearing soft needles and a light fragrance (great for allergy sufferers), it's a delicate option.

SIZE MATTERS

Make sure your tree stand is large enough to contain sufficient water. A good rule of thumb is four cups of water per every inch of the trunk's diameter.

fake it

If you opt for a faux tree, mimic the fresh scent of a real conifer with one of these products.

ORNAMENT
Tuck these discreet green stick-shaped ornaments into your tree for a month's worth of fir aroma.

ScentSicles **ORNAMENTS** in White Winter Fir, $14 per pack of 8, Bed Bath & Beyond, bedbathandbeyond.ca.

CANDLE
Poured in festive green glass, this candle emits a jolly woodsy scent as it burns.

Scented **CANDLE** in Snowy Pine & Fir Balsam, $20, Indigo, indigo.ca.

DIFFUSER
Fill your room with the fragrance of eucalyptus and pine with this designer tool.

Jo Malone London **DIFFUSER** in Pine & Eucalyptus, $95, Holt Renfrew, holtrenfrew.com.

PHOTOGRAPHY, JEAN LONGPRÉ

HE FIGHTS DIRTY *no matter how dirty* DIRTY IS.

NO MATTER WHERE THEY ARE, TOUGH MESSES DON'T STAND A CHANCE WHEN MR. CLEAN'S MAGIC ERASER IS PART OF YOUR CLEAN ROUTINE.

WHEN IT COMES TO CLEAN THERE'S ONLY ONE Mr.

Wet before use. A rinse is required for surfaces that come in direct contact with food. Use as directed.

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During the *holidays*, sometimes the chances of receiving a *gift* are directly related to the *desirability* of the gift itself. FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN YOU WHIP UP A BATCH OF THESE DELICIOUS TRUFFLES – OSTENSIBLY FOR YOUR CO-WORKERS, SAY – YOU'LL FIND THEY'RE SO GOOD THAT YOU'LL HAVE EATEN THEM ALL BEFORE YOUR OFFICEMATES EVER RECEIVE THEM. OR, IN OTHER WORDS, ONE FOR YOU, THREE FOR ME....

easy truffle temptations

RECIPE & FOOD STYLING
TANYA ENG

PHOTOGRAPHY JOE KIM

PROP STYLING
ANN MARIE FAVOT

PHILADELPHIA

Cheesecake as sweet as pie.

PECAN PIE CHEESECAKE

1-1/4 cups graham crumbs
5 Tbsp. butter, melted, divided
3 pkg (250 g each) *Philadelphia* Brick Cream Cheese, softened
1-1/4 cups packed brown sugar, divided
1 tsp. vanilla
6 eggs, divided
5 Tbsp. dark corn syrup
1 cup coarsely chopped pecans

HEAT oven to 350°F

MIX graham crumbs and 4 Tbsp. butter; press onto bottom of 9-inch springform pan.

BEAT cream cheese, 3/4 cup sugar and vanilla with mixer until blended. Add 3 eggs, 1 at a time, mixing on low speed after each, until just blended. Pour over crust.

BAKE 30 min. Meanwhile, mix remaining sugar and butter until blended. Beat in remaining eggs and corn syrup; stir in nuts. Remove cheesecake from oven; gently spoon nut mixture over cheesecake. Return to oven.

BAKE 40 min. or until nut mixture is set. Cool completely. Refrigerate at least 4 hours.

Find the how-to video and discover more delicious recipes at **PhillyCanada.com**

Another Vitamix Aha: hiding veggies in breakfast.

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1

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INGREDIENTS

MAKES 36 TRUFFLES

Truffles

600 g good-quality dark chocolate, finely chopped
¾ cup 35% cream
Cocoa powder for dusting (optional)

Toppings

3 tbsp finely chopped crystallized ginger
2 tbsp coconut chips + 2 tbsp goji berries
2 tbsp apple chips + 2 tbsp sugared thyme*
1 tbsp orange marmalade + 2 tbsp sugared rosemary*

DIRECTIONS

Fill a medium saucepan one-third full of water and bring to a simmer over medium-high heat. Place the chocolate in a large heatproof bowl; set aside. While the water is coming to a simmer, place the cream in a small saucepan and bring to a gentle boil. Remove the cream from the heat and pour over the chocolate, stirring to combine.

Place the heatproof bowl over the saucepan of simmering water, making sure the water doesn't touch the bottom of the bowl. Gently stir the chocolate mixture with a spoon until the chocolate is melted and the mixture is smooth; remove from the heat.

Line a 9" square baking pan with parchment paper, allowing the edges to hang over the sides of the pan. Pour the chocolate mixture into the pan, spreading it evenly.

Mentally divide the chocolate into quarters. Top each quarter with a different topping; swirl each quarter with the tip of a knife to slightly incorporate the topping. Place the pan in the refrigerator and chill until the chocolate is set, at least 2 hours. Remove the pan from the fridge and let stand at room temperature for 10 minutes. Lift the parchment paper out of the pan, moving the chocolate slab onto a cutting board. Using a sharp thin knife, cut the slab into 36 equal pieces. Dust the pieces with cocoa powder before serving. The truffles can be stored in the refrigerator in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

*To make the sugared herbs, place 2 sprigs fresh thyme and 2 sprigs fresh rosemary on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet; brush with 2 tablespoons egg white. Sprinkle with ½ cup superfine sugar and let stand for 30 minutes to 1 hour to dry before using.

HOLIDAY *tastemaker*

Orange Cranberry Sauce

Yield: 2½ cups (600 mL)
Total Time: 45 minutes

Ingredients
1 teaspoon orange zest
2 oranges
3 cups (300 g) fresh cranberries
¼ cup (60 mL) water
⅓ cup (75 g) light brown sugar, packed
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Directions

1. Zest, peel and cut the oranges in half.

2. In a medium-size saucepan, add the oranges, cranberries, water, brown sugar, ground cinnamon and orange zest. Cook until the cranberries pop and the mixture thickens, about 20 minutes. Cool for 15 minutes.

3. Place the cooled mixture into the Vitamix container and secure lid.

4. Select Variable 1.

5. Turn the machine on and slowly increase the speed to Variable 5.

6. Blend for 5 seconds.

7. Serve warm, room temperature or cold.

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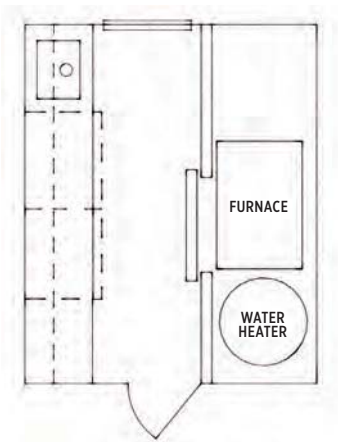
Vitamix

PROBLEM
An unfinished, uninspiring laundry room

SOLUTION
Make the job a priority by accepting a challenge

FLOOR PLAN
100 sq. ft.



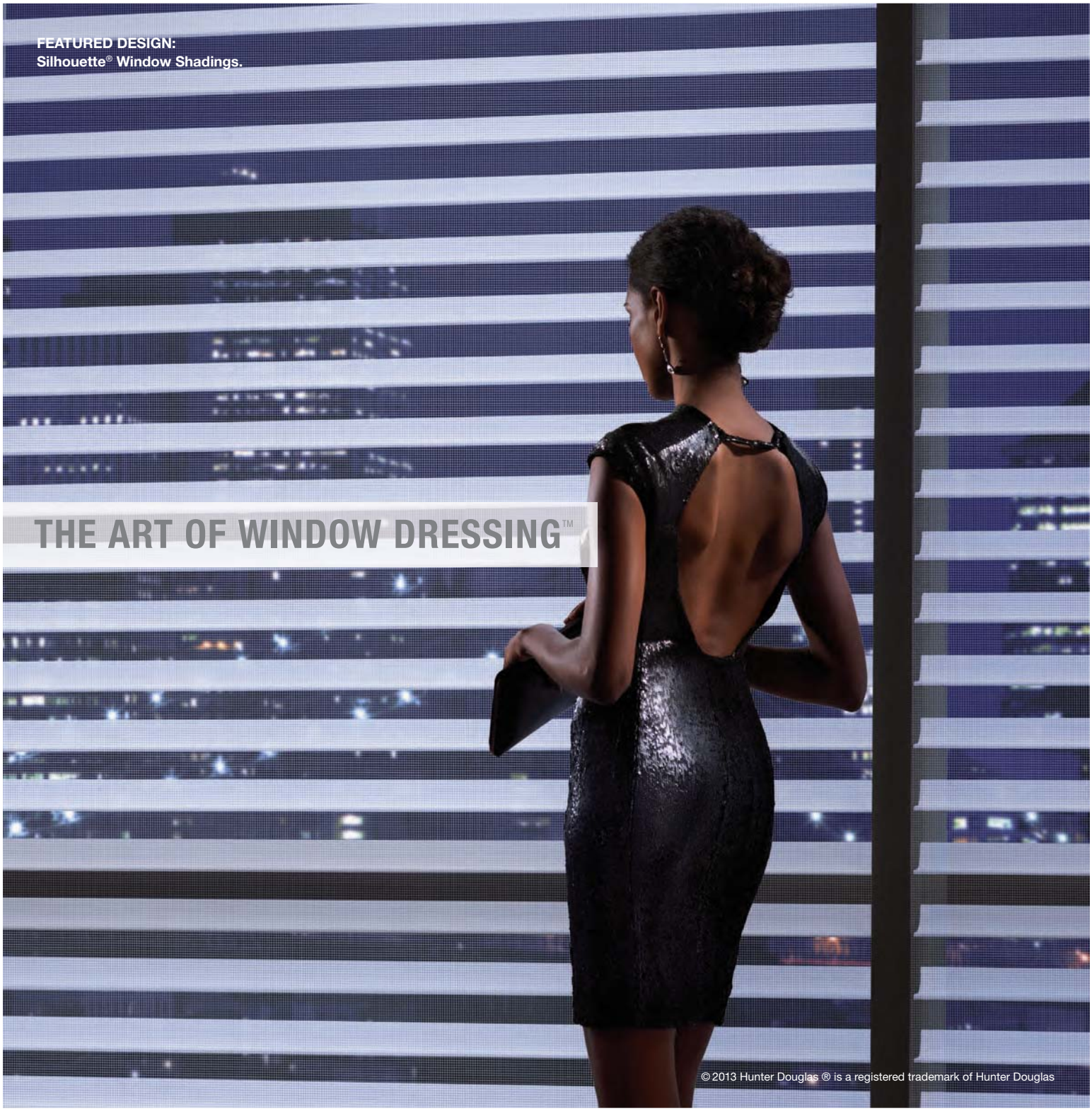
high *impact*

A dreary laundry room turns into a dreamy space in just six weeks.

TEXT LESLEY YOUNG | **PHOTOGRAPHY** ASHLEY CAPP

ABOVE The One Room Challenge was the perfect thing "to light a fire under our butts," says homeowner and designer Sarah Walker of her basement laundry room reno. She rallied her handy husband, Graham, to do all the construction. "He's the real star here," she adds. The work area's varying counter heights create more rhythm and interest than a straight run would have; the brass accents along with the white oak help warm up the cool palette.

DESIGN, The Curated House by Sarah Walker, thecuratedhouse.com; **CABINETRY,** IKEA; **COUNTERTOPS,** Silestone; **BACKSPLASH & FLOOR TILES,** Creekside Tile; **WASHER, DRYER,** Samsung; custom **FLOATING SHELF,** The Curated House by Sarah Walker; **CABINETRY HARDWARE,** Upper Canada Specialty Hardware; **BINS,** Toofifteen; **VASES,** Black Rooster Decor; **TOWELS, CANDLE,** rock **SOAPS,** Anthropologie.



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Designer Sarah Walker found herself facing the same dilemma as the proverbial shoemaker with no shoes. She'd finished countless fabulous design projects for clients, while her own Oakville, Ont., basement laundry room sat dark and unfinished. "It was such a depressing space, nobody wanted to do the laundry," says Sarah with a laugh. What she needed was a deadline, and Sarah found the perfect one in the spring 2015 edition of the One Room Challenge, an online event where 20 designers have six weeks to complete a project. Design caution: Six weeks is an unrealistic timeline for any major renovation. "It was madcap," she says, pointing out she had to leverage all the tricks of the trade to get the space done in time.

The planning process

To eliminate one of the most time-consuming tasks of the design process, Sarah finalized the floor plan and sourced her most important materials before Day 1 of the challenge. "The biggest layout problem was the furnace and water heater," she says. "They were the first things you saw when you walked in the room." She landed upon the ideal solution to strike a visual balance: a wall of white oak-veneered sliding doors to conceal the "guts" of the home on one side counterweighted by a work area on the other. Originally, she planned for a bank of cabinets above the work surface. "But with the sliding doors, I didn't want to close off the space completely." Instead, she opted for a chunky floating shelf in matching white oak.

The design decisions

Sarah's design style is approachably sophisticated injected with high-contrast statements. Here, the visual pow comes from the handmade cement floor tiles. "They feel modern and traditional at the same time – I love them," she says. Black base cabinets ground the space, while the white oak of the sliding doors and floating shelf help balance the dramatic qualities of the floor and cabinetry.

The result

"It sounds comical, but now when people come over, they ask to see the space. I feel like I could serve tea down there and my friends would be pretty happy," says Sarah.

SLIDING DOORS CONCEAL THE FURNACE AND WATER HEATER.

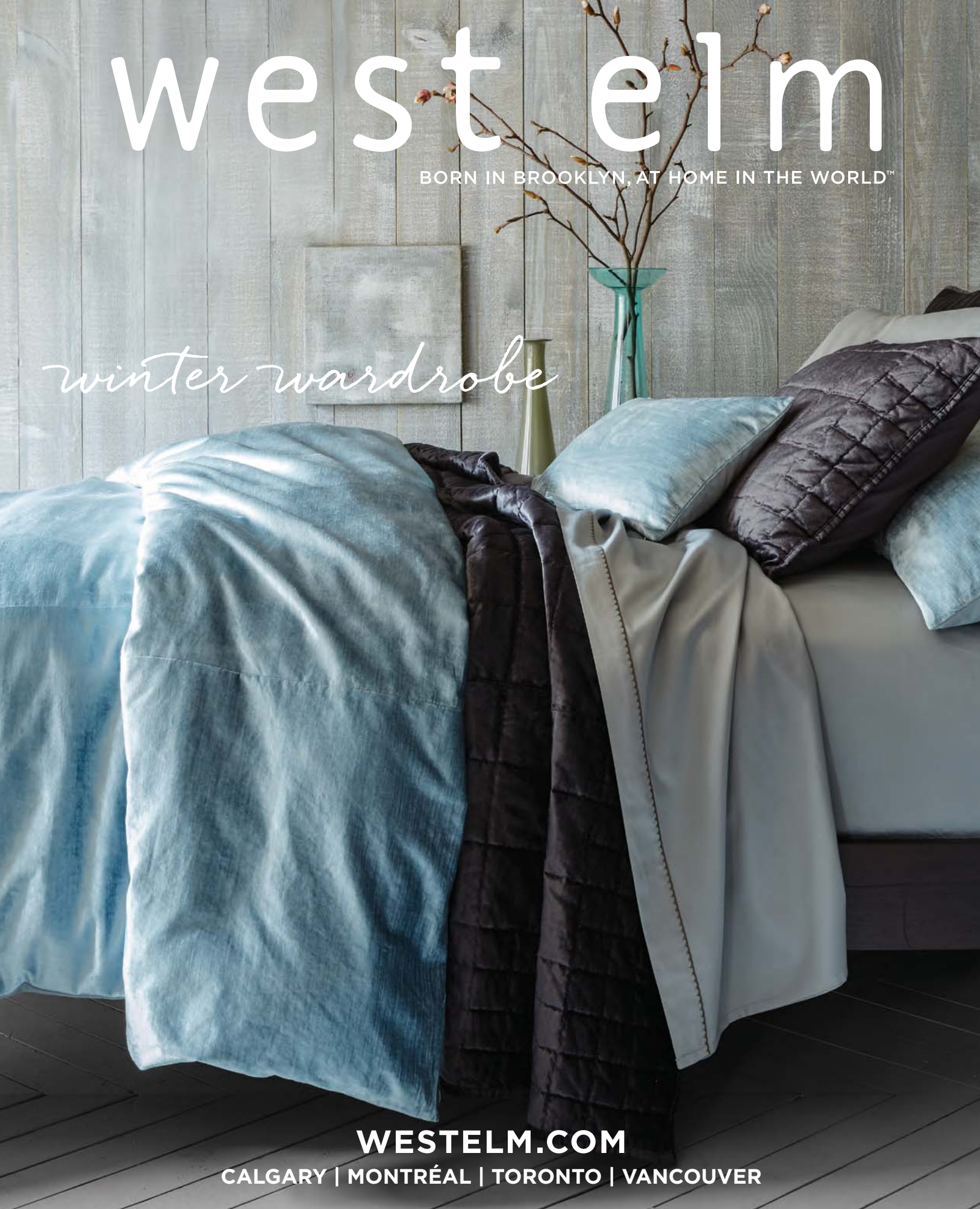
ABOVE "I went with a subtle subway tile for the backsplash so it wouldn't compete with the graphic patterned floor," says Sarah. Grey grout brings out the tiles' bevelled edges and complements the veining in the quartz countertops.

SINK, The Home Depot; **FAUCET,** Delta Faucet; **TRIM,** Metrie; **TERRARIUM** (filled with detergent), West Elm.

LEFT Sarah splurged on white oak for the sliding doors. "I waited six years to do this room, and I wanted to do it right," she says.

SLIDING DOORS, Metrie; **SLIDING DOOR HARDWARE,** Upper Canada Specialty Hardware.

FOR SOURCES, SEE OUR WORKBOOK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TIP: Keep the rest of the elements in the room "quiet" so the focus stays on the patterned tile, as shown in this kitchen featuring Walker Zanger ceramic tile.

patterned tile

Design editor Stacy Begg is crushing on this wall- and floor covering in a monochromatic palette. Here, she tells us why.

Patterned tiles are all the rage. We've seen them at historic sites and commercial establishments for quite some time (check out @ihavethisthingwithfloors on Instagram for proof), but they're making their way into residential spaces at lightning speed. You can attain either an old- or new-world look at home with two types of tile available in the marketplace: cement and porcelain. Cement tiles are handmade by pouring pigmented mixtures and cement layers into a mould and compressing them, while mass-produced porcelain tiles are made by glazing and firing clay at high temperatures for long periods of time.

cement tiles vs. porcelain tiles

pros: **Eco-friendly; handmade for lots of character and charm; perfect for bathroom floors and backsplashes in kitchens.**

cons: **Need to be sealed periodically; slight imperfections from being made by hand; weight means shipping can be expensive.**

pros: **Durable and long lasting; stain and scratch resistant; easy to clean; generally less expensive; ideal for high-traffic areas like kitchens and entryways.**

cons: **Can lack character from being machine made; more difficult to cut during installation.**

LIKE COLOUR?

Try this geometric option in shades of blue with a touch of yellow. It makes a statement but is subtle enough to share space with other bold elements.

Cement Tangier **TILE** in Black, Atmosphere, Velvet Sky, Malibu Blue & Maple Sugar, 8" x 8", $34 per sq. ft., Creekside Tile, creeksidetile.com.

WORDS OF WISDOM

I prefer patterned tiles that are monochromatic, like these graphic black and white ones from the Cement Tile Shop. The more colours there are in the tile, the more difficult it's going to be to work other elements into the room.

PHOTOGRAPHY, COURTESY OF WALKER ZANGER (KITCHEN), ASHLEY CAPP (BATHROOM), RYAN BROOK (TILES)

Promenade cement Flag **TILES** in Citrus, Salt & Light Cool Grey, 8″ x 8″, $47 per sq. ft., Waterworks, waterworks.com.

Eastern Promise cement Mamounia **TILES** in Palazzo, 8″ x 8″, $32 per sq. ft., Ann Sacks, annsacks.com.

Pacific Collection cement Diagonal **TILES** in Grey & White, 8″ x 8″, $16 US per sq. ft., Cement Tile Shop, cementtileshop.com.

Porcelain Provence **TILES,** 8″ x 8″, $9 per sq. ft., Saltillo Imports, saltillo-tiles.com.

Stacy's top picks

Here are eight of my favourite monochromatic patterned tiles – I'm drawn to both intricate traditional designs and graphic modern adaptations. Use them in small doses to avoid an overly busy look.

Pacific Collection cement Star **TILES** in Black, White & Light Grey, 8″ x 8″, $16 US per sq. ft., Cement Tile Shop, cementtileshop.com.

1900 porcelain Llagostera **TILES,** 8″ x 8″, $12 per sq. ft., Mettro Source, mettro.ca.

Cement Gypsy **TILES** in Putty & Pebble, 8″ x 8″, $27 per sq. ft., Creekside Tile, creeksidetile.com.

Porcelain Faenza **TILE** in Gris, scored with 9 assorted patterns, 13″ x 13″, $12 per sq. ft., Mettro Source, mettro.ca.

high OR low?

Check out page 34 for more graphic patterned tiles.

This kitchen is apt to churn out both Michelin-starred and home-cooked holiday fare. Can you tell the difference?

PRODUCER ANDREA MCCRINDLE

TEXT MARY LEVITSKI

PHOTOGRAPHY MICHAEL NANGREAVES

HIGH & LOW Sektion/Ringhult **CABINETRY,** Domsjö **SINK,** poured **CANDLES** (on ledge), IKEA, ikea.ca; Caesarstone **COUNTERTOP,** Keramin Canada, keramin.ca; concrete Geode **TEA LIGHT HOLDERS,** Nineteen Ten, nineteenten.ca; **TUMBLER** (on sink), Bridget Bodenham, bridgetbodenhamceramics.bigcartel.com; Moroccan **BOWL** (on counter), West Elm, westelm.com; stainless steel **CARVING SET** with cutting board (not shown), William Ashley China, williamashley.com; **PLATES,** Speck and Stone, speckandstone.com; **FLATWARE,** CB2, cb2.ca.

$657

1 Hinkley mini steel Rigby **PENDANT LIGHTS** in Buckeye Bronze, $219 each, Universal Lamp, greatlighting.com.

$989

2 Villa Lagoon handmade cement Concentric Hex C **BACKSPLASH TILES** in Featherstone, Excalibur & Putty, 8″ x 9″, $33 per sq. ft., Creekside Tile, creeksidetile.com.

$985

3 One-handle high-arc pull-down STo **FAUCET** in Spot Resist Stainless with MotionSense, Moen, moen.ca.

$135

4 Medium maple Edge-grain **CARVING BOARD,** Williams-Sonoma, williams-sonoma.com.

$288

5 Staub enamelled cast-iron Round **COCOTTE** in Cherry, 6 l, Kitchen Stuff Plus, kitchenstuffplus.com.

$5,196

6 Dual-Fuel **RANGE,** 30″, Monogram, monogram.ca.

$49

7 Anodized aluminum **DRAWER PULLS** in Satin Aluminum, 12′ (cut to size), through designers, Richelieu Hardware, richelieu.com.

$175

8 Le Creuset enamelled stoneware Rectangular **CASSEROLE** in Cherry with lid (not shown), 9″ x 16″, Hudson's Bay, thebay.com.

$19

9 Cotton Market **TEA TOWEL** in Center Stripe, per 2-piece set, West Elm, westelm.com.

$66

10 Narumi bone china Classic White **GRAVY BOAT** with saucer, William Ashley China, williamashley.com.

$185US

11 White handmade round porcelain **PLATTER,** 15″, Looks Like White, lookslikewhite.etsy.com.

$375

1 Matteo mini metal **PENDANT LIGHTS** in Black, $125 each, Universal Lamp, greatlighting.com.

$608US

2 Handmade cement Strata III **BACKSPLASH TILES,** 8″ x 9″, $21 US per sq. ft., Cement Tile Shop, cementtileshop.com.

$550

3 One-handle high-arc pull-down Align **FAUCET** in Spot Resist Stainless, Moen, moen.ca.

$17

4 Bamboo Aptitlig **CARVING BOARD,** IKEA, ikea.ca.

$112

5 Le Cuistot Vieille enamelled cast-iron Round **COCOTTE** in Red, 7 l, Kitchen Stuff Plus, kitchenstuffplus.com.

$3,299

6 GE Café Dual-Fuel **RANGE,** 30″, GE Appliances, geappliances.ca.

$16

7 Aluminum Blankett **DRAWER PULLS,** 15″, $8 per pair, IKEA, ikea.ca.

$68

8 Le Cuistot Vieille enamelled cast-iron **CASSEROLE** in Red, 11″ x 14″, Kitchen Stuff Plus, kitchenstuffplus.com.

$1

9 Cotton Tekla **TEA TOWEL,** IKEA, ikea.ca.

$12

10 GlucksteinHome bone china Quincy Pinstripe **GRAVY BOAT,** $6, and **SAUCER** in White, $6, Hudson's Bay, thebay.com.

$23

11 Form porcelain Round **PLATTER,** 14″, Crate and Barrel, crateandbarrel.ca.

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13 turkey dinner essentials

1. Carving set
2. Platter
3. Carving board
4. Roasting pan
5. Electric hand mixer
6. Potato masher
7. Basting brush
8. Baster
9. Food-safe twine
10. Gravy separator
11. Digital thermometer
12. Vegetable peeler
13. Gravy boat

SANTA HAS THE RIGHT IDEA, MAKING HIS LIST AND CHECKING IT TWICE, AND EVERY HOST SHOULD DO THE SAME. WE'VE DRAFTED A CHECKLIST OF THE 13 ESSENTIAL TOOLS FOR SERVING UP A FULL TURKEY DINNER, COMPLETE WITH ALL THE FIXINGS.

Progetti stainless steel **CARVING SET,** $69, Mikasa bone china Elegance White **GRAVY BOAT,** $120, William Ashley China, williamashley.com; stoneware Heirloom **PLATTER,** $65, medium maple Edge-grain **CARVING BOARD,** $112, Wi-Fi-enabled Smart Digital **THERMOMETER,** $135, Williams-Sonoma, williams-sonoma.com; Lagostina stainless steel **ROASTING PAN** with lifting rack, $150, Home Outfitters, homeoutfitters.com; KitchenAid 5-speed Ultra Power **HAND MIXER,** $80, Zwilling J.A. Henckels Twin Pure stainless steel **POTATO MASHER,** $37, and Y-shaped **PEELER,** $25, Le Creuset silicone-tipped Revolution **BASTING BRUSH,** $27, Hudson's Bay, thebay.com; Sevy Pro Series stainless steel **BASTER** with scrub brush (not shown), $10, KSP glass Pronto **GRAVY SEPARATOR,** $10, Kitchen Stuff Plus, kitchen-stuffplus.com; cotton **COOKING TWINE** with cutter, $20, Crate and Barrel, crateandbarrel.ca.

MAD OVER BOAT

Like all other specialty dishware, a **gravy boat** has an air of opulence. But you don't have to be on the gravy train to afford it: We found one for a scant $7! Whatever your budget, seek out an all-white version. It's a timeless choice that's sure to complement any tablescape, and the array of available shapes – from rounded to angular – is dizzyingly delightful.

curvy Narumi bone china Classic White, William Ashley China, williamashley.com.

fluid Porcelain Isabel, Bowring, bowring.com.

angular Mikasa bone china Elegance White, William Ashley China, williamashley.com.

rounded Porcelain Pour, Crate and Barrel, crateandbarrel.ca.

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pitter platter

The holidays often bring the whole family together under one roof, and the house comes alive with activity. With such cherished company and the benefit of extra time, there's no better occasion for the home chef to show off his or her skills – and we do mean show off. Bust out the fancy china, pour that vintage wine you've been saving and splurge on a statement centrepiece. And of course, the pièce de résistance, the turkey, ought to be served in style (needless to say, we're strongly opposed to the electric carver). Present the bird on a large platter that suits your table setting, be it classic or modern, and slice it right at the table using a traditional carving set. It's a long-lived ritual that's worth upholding.

1 Fishs Eddy stoneware Gilded **PLATTER,** $59, West Elm, westelm.com; **2** handmade glazed stoneware Intermix **PLATTER,** $20, CB2, cb2.ca; Progetti stainless steel **CARVING SET,** $69, William Ashley China, williamashley.com; **3** crackle-glazed stoneware scalloped Heirloom **PLATTER,** $65, Williams-Sonoma, williams-sonoma.com.

GIFT REDDY

BAKE YOUR POTLUCK DISH IN A FESTIVE RED **CASSEROLE** AND, IF YOU'RE FEELING GENEROUS, LET THE HOST KEEP IT.

HIGH

Simply Calphalon enamelled cast-iron, 9″ x 13″, $110, Bed Bath & Beyond, bedbathandbeyond.ca.

Dansk Kobenstyle enamelled steel in Chili Red, 9″ x 13″, $100, William Ashley China, williamashley.com.

Le Creuset enamelled cast-iron Heritage in Cherry, 9″ x 13″, $90, Williams-Sonoma, williams-sonoma.com.

LOW

Glazed stoneware Potluck Lasagna, 10″ x 15″, $27, Crate and Barrel, crateandbarrel.ca.

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A BLOGGER *Christmas*

We asked a few of Canada's top decor bloggers to work their Christmas magic on an empty living room. The results are three dramatically different holiday looks all equally ready for Santa's arrival.

CHRISTINE DOVEY

elegantly eclectic

JENNIFER FLORES

refined rustic

TIM LAM

beautifully bold

PHOTOGRAPHY
STACEY BRANDFORD

Elegantly Eclectic

"I like to mix traditional with modern and pair maximalist notions with more restrained sculptural items. This luxuriously feminine blush pink, deep burgundy and pale mint palette – my favourite colour scheme at the moment – is balanced by the graphic simplicity of all the black and white. The old-world-inspired wallpaper and glamorous floral garland (I always say think beyond standard Christmas greenery!) influenced the direction of this look, and the opulent result has a more-is-more vibe."

–CHRISTINE DOVEY, BIJOU & BOHEME

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Refined Rustic

"I design rooms that are welcoming and livable, with nothing too precious in them. The magic here is in the high-contrast pairings like the black accents against the white wall, as well as the clean-lined architecture of the board-and-batten panelling combined with the textured furnishings. I also always include a hint of whimsy and a DIY or two, like the woodblock houses and the Advent calendar of cotton bags tied to a piece of twine. It all results in a style I'd describe as Scandinavian meets traditional."

–JENNIFER FLORES, RAMBLING RENOVATORS

"EVERY MORNING, MY SIX-YEAR-OLD, CHLOE, *can't wait to open a bag from the Advent calendar.* IT'S BECOME ONE OF OUR FAVOURITE HOLIDAY TRADITIONS."

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Beautifully Bold

"I arrived upon this magical masculine scheme by mixing patterns and textures with eclectic objects. While the palette and furnishings are more traditional, the vignette feels fresh, thanks to whimsical organic touches like felt bird ornaments, the moss wreath, the pineapple artwork and the pompom tree skirt. The trick to making a look cohesive is to ensure the patterns are all consistent in colour. In this case, everything is blue, white, black and grey. The result is a dynamic space that will still sparkle well after Christmas."

–TIM LAM, DESIGN MAZE

FOR SOURCES, SEE OUR WORKBOOK

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the holiday HUSTLE

TEXT JENNIFER HUGHES | **PHOTOGRAPHY** JANIS NICOLAY

When November hits, the pressure is on for any busy family. The real challenge, however, is keeping the holidays as fun and stress-free as possible. Despite hectic careers, hockey tournaments, theatre performances and family gatherings, Surrey, B.C., designer Lisa Moody of Grapevine Designs tackles this feat with panache, along with her husband, Ron, and their kids, Svea, 14, Eston, 12, and Eli, 9. Here, we get a glimpse into their stylish 6,900-square-foot home, plus a few of the festive traditions that make Christmas especially merry for the Moody clan.

ON THE DIY GARLAND Homeowner and designer Lisa Moody made this Advent calendar garland 10 years ago by combining her kids' stray socks with some Christmas-themed ones bought on sale after the holidays.

DESIGN, Grapevine Designs, grapevinedesigns.ca.

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holiday SANITY SAVER

"We decorate our faux tree at the end of November. It's nice to get the decorating done early so we can enjoy the season longer."

ON TRIMMING THE TREE "There will be a day when I'll have a formal Christmas tree," says Lisa with a laugh. But when three kids are contributing to the scheme, bright, fun colours and childhood mementoes reign for now.

SOFA, ARMCHAIRS, Grapevine Designs; **ARMCHAIR FABRIC,** Kravet Canada; **COFFEE TABLE,** IKEA; **RUG,** faux **CHRISTMAS TREE,** Costco; gold polka dot **TOSS CUSHION,** Anthropologie; blue and coral **TOSS CUSHIONS,** HomeSense; **MARQUEE LETTERS,** Restoration Hardware.

ON THE FAMILY GATHERING SPOT The kids (from left), Svea, Eli and Eston, hang out with Lisa (far right) and enjoy Christmas treats in the dining area. The simple modern table and chairs are durable, practical choices for family mealtime.

ARTWORK, HomeSense.

ON CREATIVE WRAPPING Lisa packages presents using plain white kraft paper jazzed up with colourful and patterned ribbons as well as leftover scraps of holiday gift wrap.

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holiday SANITY SAVER

"When a big dinner party seems too overwhelming, we'll have friends over for cocktails and snacks by the fire."

ON THE HOLIDAY HUB The Moody home is *the* place for family parties during the holidays, and the island in the kitchen, with its yellow wooden stools, is where everyone gathers.

Custom **CABINETRY,** Old World Kitchens & Custom Cabinets; **STOOLS,** Grapevine Designs; **PENDANT LIGHTS,** Norburn Lighting & Bath Centre.

ON THE ELF ON THE SHELF The fireplace, which has a soaring marble-clad surround, is a focal point for the family during the holidays. Can you spot the Elf on the Shelf? It sits in one of the the built-in maple cubbies and is the origin of many hilarious holiday shenanigans.

Custom built-in **SHELVES,** Grapevine Designs; **ANIMAL HEAD,** West Elm.

ON THE EASIEST KIDS' PARTY EVER Lisa hosts a Christmas party for the kids and their friends. This year, they're decorating gingerbread cookies and enjoying hot chocolate in festive mugs with marshmallows, candy canes and chocolate chips.

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BEDROOMS 101

- Decide on the mood you want to create; for example, calm, spirited or fresh.
- Select a bedding pattern that inspires the mood.
- Pull the colours for paint, window coverings, accent cushions, etc., from the bedding's palette.
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1. Custom creation. Printable **ARTWORK**, from $10, Elemenopee Design, elemenopeedesign.etsy.com. 2. Bold border. Woven raffia **FRAME** in Turquoise, 14" x 17", $78 US, Serena & Lily, serenaandlily.com. 3. Melt-in-your-mouth sweets. **MACARONS**, $28 per dozen, Nadège, nadege-patisserie.com. 4. Golden touch. Rosanna Lumière **TEA LIGHT HOLDER**, $32 per pair, Amazon.ca. 5. Feathered friend. Paperchase Flamingo **FIGURINE**, $19, Hudson's Bay, thebay.com.

▶ **Fancy feet.** Cotton blend **SLIPPERS,** $30, Gap, gapcanada.ca.

▶ **Culinary art.** Folk **PENCIL,** $12 per assorted 12-piece set, Peony **RECIPE CARDS,** $12 per set of 12, Capri Tin **RECIPE BOX,** $34, Rifle Paper Co., riflepaperco.com.

FUN, WHIMSICAL GIFTS

for the person who always takes a moment to get in touch with his or her creative side.

1. **Numbers game.** **DOMINO SET,** $7, HomeSense, homesense.ca.

2. **Punchy pouch.** Polka Dot **COIN PURSE** in Blue, $10, Old Navy, oldnavy.ca.

3. **Iconic timepiece.** Weekender Tweed **WATCH** in Gold-Tone with Tan strap, $80, Timex, timex.ca.

4. **Rainbow-bright ramblings.** Avril Loreti Escapade **NOTEBOOK,** $12 per set of 2, One of a Kind Online Shop, oneofakindonlineshop.com.

5. **Prosecco-infused confection.** Squish Bubbly Bears **GUMMIES,** $6 per 140 g pack, Hudson's Bay, thebay.com.

6. **Colourful wonders.** *Splendid Cities* **COLOURING BOOK** by Rosie Goodwin and Alice Chadwick, $18, *Fantastic Cities* **COLOURING BOOK** by Steve McDonald, $20, Indigo, indigo.ca.

◀ **Cozy comfort.** Alpaca Stripe **THROW,** $295 US, Jonathan Adler, jonathanadler.com.

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▼ Shining adornments. Star **ORNAMENTS,** $7 per set of 12 (ribbons not included), Bouclair, bouclair.com.

▲ Lucky charms. Horseshoes **GAME SET,** $200, Crate and Barrel, crateandbarrel.ca.

ELEGANT, FEMININE GIFTS

for the person who always takes a moment to appreciate life's little luxuries.

1. Chic sheets. Style at Home Collection queen embroidered cotton Dark Beauty **SHEET SET,** $120 per 4-piece set, Sears, sears.ca.

2. Blissful slumber. Silk **EYE MASK** in Pink, $35, Au Lit Fine Linens, aulitfinelinens.com.

3. Coffee mate. Porcelain Mine **MUG,** $16, Easy, Tiger, cards-forawesomepeople.com.

4. Heavenly flakes. **PASTRIES,** $5 per 3 pieces, Nadège, nadege-patisserie.com.

5. Faceted fare. Porcelain Gem **APPETIZER PLATE,** $6, CB2, cb2.ca.

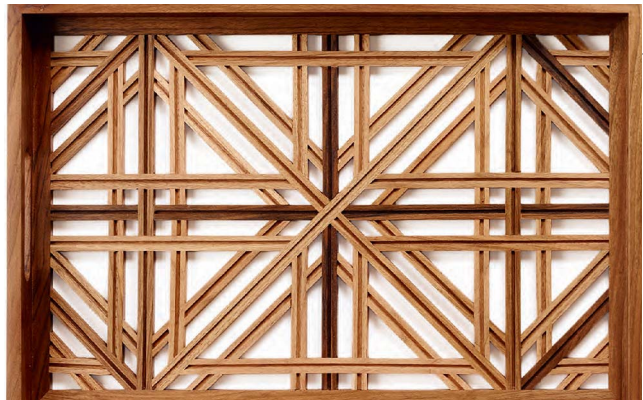
6. Shimmery serviette. Cotton Gold Dot **NAPKIN,** $13 per set of 6, HomeSense, homesense.ca.

7. Barely-there server. Format acrylic Square **TRAY** in Clear, $55, CB2, cb2.ca.

8. Musical masterpiece. Caeden Linea N°1 **HEADPHONES** in Faceted Ceramic & Rose Gold, $180, Indigo, indigo.ca.

9. High-quality entertainment. Fire HD 7 **TABLET,** $184, Amazon.ca.

► Guiding light. Brass-finished **FLASHLIGHT,** $35, CB2, cb2.ca.



► Fair-trade find. Medium walnut Jali Lattice **TRAY,** $259, Far & Wide Collective, farandwidecollective.ca.

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▶ **Jagged gems.** Michael Aram Rock **CANDLESTICKS**, $275 per pair, Elte, elte.com.

MODERN, STYLISH GIFTS

for the person who always takes a moment to revel in the company of others.

1. Stylish sips. PC Home glass **WHISKY SET** (includes decanter, not shown), $40 per 3-piece set, Loblaws, Real Canadian Superstore, superstore.ca.

2. Cocktail bling. Rosanna Chez Elle **DECANTER TAGS**, $49 per 6-piece set, Amazon.ca.

3. Cupid's pick. Arrow **COCKTAIL PICKS**, $12 per set of 4, Indigo, indigo.ca.

4. Dainty dish. Porcelain Gem **BOWL**, $4, CB2, cb2.ca.

5. Display-worthy platter. Marble Condiment **SERVING TRAY**, $78, Williams-Sonoma, williams-sonoma.com.

6. Wine lover's catch. Kikkerland Fish **CORKSCREW** in Lightwood, $15, Hudson's Bay, thebay.com.

7. Hostess bible. *All in Good Taste* **BOOK** by Kate Spade New York, $34, Indigo, indigo.ca.

8. Foodie favourite. Wood and marble **CUTTING BOARD**, from $17, HomeSense, homesense.ca.

9. Perfect pare. Victorinox Swiss Army Swiss Classic **PARING KNIFE** in White, 3.25", $7, Williams Food Equipment, williamsfoodequipment.com.

10. Marble marvel. Marble **CITRUS REAMER**, $45, Williams-Sonoma, williams-sonoma.com.

◀ **Glam accoutrements.** Marjorie Camiré ceramic **MILK JUG**, $50, and **SUGAR BOWL**, $30, One of a Kind Show, oneofakindshow.com.

▲ **Wild thing.** Woodland **RING HOLDER**, $34, West Elm, westelm.com.

▼ **Handy heartbreak.** Two-piece maple Heart-Shaped **TRIVET** with walnut link, $73, AHeirloom, aheirloom.com.

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Christmas at the Bakers' West Edmonton residence means a dose of creativity and a dash of fun – all presented in a classic holiday palette.

TEXT AMANDA ETTY | **PHOTOGRAPHY** ROBIN STUBBERT

A HOLLY JOLLY *christmas*

HOLLY BAKER wears many hats: She's a resourceful renovator and genius DIYer (as evidenced in *Style at Home*'s June and July 2014 issues, which feature Holly's handiwork); she's the blogger behind In the Fun Lane; and she's a wife to her husband, Sean, and mom to her six-year-old daughter, Wren. At Christmastime, Holly also dons the proverbial Santa cap and jazzes up her home using her signature playful high-low approach to decorating. It's the same MO that defines all her endeavours – style-driven, accessible and totally crafty. "I like to think our Christmas scheme is a fun twist on simple, natural holiday style," she says. To that effect, red and white decorations (including plenty of handmade ones) impress alongside loads of fresh greenery, mostly clipped from the Bakers' yard. The resulting look is perfectly festive and fit for Christmas baking sessions with Wren and grown-up dinner parties alike.

1 GUIDING LIGHT A holiday tradition, Advent candles are lit each Sunday in the weeks leading up to Christmas. In keeping with her home's red and white holiday scheme, homeowner Holly Baker found these numbered candles to indicate the weeks. She notes that these would be a cinch to create with white candles, stencils and red paint.

2 MOOD MAKERS Nothing compares to candlelight when it comes to creating an intimate atmosphere on chilly winter evenings. A grouping of candles sits in a bright red tray; when it's lit en masse, it evokes a serene holiday scene. The rustic-look candlesticks were crafted by tightly wrapping twine around the necks and bases of glass bottles and then securing the ends with glue.

3 WRAP STAR Who wouldn't love to receive one of Holly's brown paper packages tied up with yarn? She makes her gifts extra-special by topping them with pompoms created with a pompom maker (which can be found at craft-supply or fabric stores).

4 RICE EFFECT "I love decorating with greenery from our yard, since it's free and festive," says Holly with a laugh. For this simple display, vintage glass jars were filled halfway with white rice and their rims embellished with cedar sprigs attached with floral wire. Basic pillar candles were then nestled into the rice.

5 FINAL COUNTDOWN "The day we decorate the tree is always a favourite in our house," says Holly. In lieu of a traditional Advent calendar, Holly adorns the Christmas tree with mini gift bags embellished with numbers (one through 24) and filled with tiny treasures. These ones were store-bought, but they can be easily made with paper gift bags and numbered tags or stickers. "Wren loves to look for the numbered bag each day," she says. Holly also decorates the faux tree with hand-ripped lengths of fabric tied into bows, patterned garlands and straw ornaments.

6 MERRY MANTEL The fireplace mantel has a lovingly homespun look thanks to evergreen boughs, woolly cable-knit stockings and three strands of patterned garland. Each stocking was given a mock monogram with the addition of a lettered tag.

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Swede dreams are made of these: bold palettes, playful accents, personal details and the patina of well-loved pieces. Get inspired to take your Swedish style to the next level this holiday season.

TEXT SARA CATION

PHOTOGRAPHY CARINA OLANDER

STYLING CARINA OLANDER & ANNA TRUELSEN

SCANDI *CRUSH*

1

WITH FILES FROM ANNA TRUELSEN

1 SNOW JOB The dining room celebrates a snowy winter landscape with its all-white envelope, minimalistic rustic decor, huge untreated windows and potted fir and cypress trees peppered around the perimeter. It's so open and airy, it feels almost as though you're about to eat your saffron buns (a traditional Swedish Christmas treat) outdoors.

2 CANNED GOODS
Swedes have a way of seeing beauty in the unexpected – even a can of beans. Filled with hyacinth bulbs here and candles elsewhere, they're a cheeky (and inexpensive) way to underscore the bold and bright colour scheme.

3 PUBLIC DISPLAY
Though the kitchen is small and suffers from limited storage, stacking dishware in the open means everything is within easy reach when guests drop by.

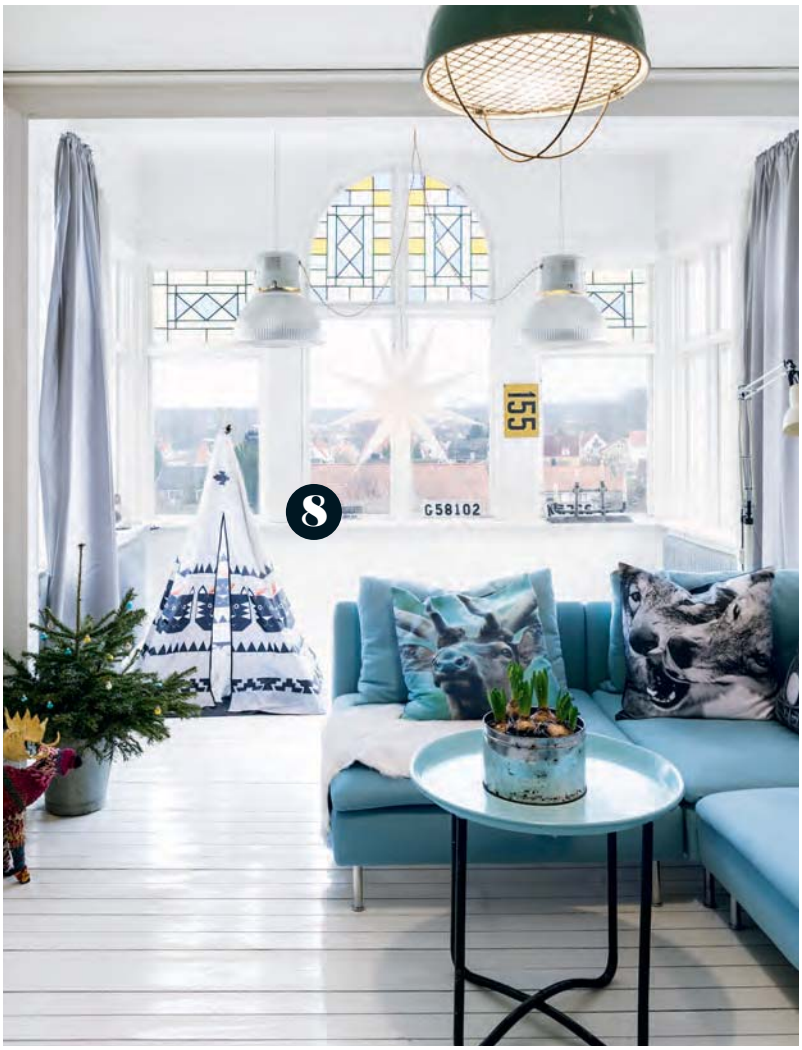
4 SWEET SCENTS
Fragrance is key to the homeowners' approach to Christmas decorating. In addition to the hyacinths, fir trees and pine boughs, the smell of fresh-baked gingerbread cookies plays a starring role.

5 BASKET CASE
Another atypical accent that proves there are infinite possibilities when fashioning fresh decor? The downstairs living room's trio of industrial-chic pendant lights made from workaday wire baskets.

6 TREE AGENT
The homeowners buy a real tree at the start of the season to add a healthy dose of festivity to the otherwise minimal holiday decor. The stout tree is adorned with pinecones, mushroom ornaments, mini lanterns and cards wishing onlookers "God Jul" (Swedish for "Merry Christmas"). We love that the tree is topped with a disproportionately sized tiny wizard toy – a wink that captures the whimsy of Scandi style.

7 DIFFERENT STROKES

"No two Christmases are the same here," says one of the homeowners. "This year, the scheme is yellow and turquoise, but next year it will definitely be something different." Having a black and white living room makes this approach easy – switching out accessories like blankets and toss cushions means these sunny accent colours are low commitment.



8 STAR QUALITY
The large white star in the window of the upstairs living room is barely visible in daytime but beams brightly at night. This popular Swedish method of lighting the long, dark winter hours is just as welcome here in Canada.

9 CHECK MARK
The fresh pastel checkered floor complements the bold high-contrast stripes on the wall and window covering. The seasonal notions are simple: a small potted cypress tree, hyacinth bulbs lining the stairs and a set of ski poles.

10 OFFICE SPACE
In the office nook, nothing is fussy or overdone. Wall-hung twinkle lights are paired with a container of fresh pine boughs.

winter wonderland

This whimsical white set-up brings nature and winter indoors for a Christmas look so muted, it could stay until spring.

TEXT SARA CATION | **PHOTOGRAPHY** TRACEY AYTON

Sleigh bells ring. Are you listening? Lifestyle blogger Monika Hibbs is. But bells aren't the only hallmarks of the holiday invited into the Port Coquitlam, B.C., Mosaic Homes showhouse that she styled for the season. There are also natural materials, muted colours, a woodland menagerie and a dramatic flocked tree. (It's a beautiful sight, we're happy tonight....) Here are 10 decor tips Monika uses to capture the spirit of the snow-covered sylvan landscape Santa calls home.

1 AIM FOR THE TOP When you spend so much time and effort (and money!) collecting ornaments, why let the tree topper steal the show? This muted vintage-look star complements the tree without overpowering it.

2 SPLURGE ON DRAMA One of Monika Hibbs's top holiday indulgences is a real flocked tree. "If you use the same ornaments year to year, you can justify this little luxury," she says. Have the lights strung on first, so they get dusted with that frosting, too – your tree will radiate with a golden glow.

3 HAVE ANIMAL INSTINCTS What's more fitting for a flocked tree than the animals commonly associated with a snowy forest? Monika doesn't pinch her pennies when it comes to picking out unique ornaments with intricate details, but she balances out costs by filling in the tree with big-box store baubles as well.

4 GET FUNCTIONAL Even the mud room gets a dose of Christmas cheer with a faux tree, a wispy faux pine wreath and tall baskets holding decorative branches and gift wrap.

5 MAKE IT MEANINGFUL "Invest in ornaments that mark life's many milestones," suggests Monika, "so your Christmas tree tells your own personal story, from adopting a pet to buying your first house to having a baby."

6 KEEP IT SIMPLE, SANTA You don't have to go over the top – quiet touches often sing the loudest. On the coffee table, a glass cloche over a sparkly faux pinecone, an elegant white felt ball garland and a white deer figurine (shown opposite) strike a note in perfect holiday harmony.

7 SPRINKLE WITH TWINKLE Elevate your holiday dining table with twinkle lights. Reflected in the glass vessels and silver accents, they create an elegant display that echoes the look of the tree.

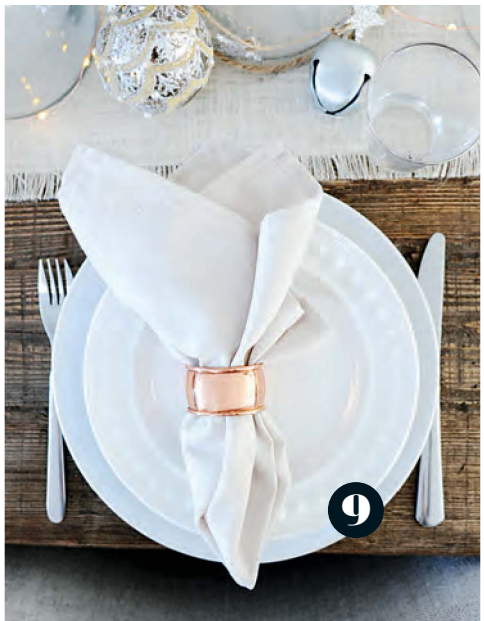
8 ADD AMBIENCE Candles cast a glow that makes for magical holiday lighting. They set the mood for sipping mulled wine by the fire or watching *It's a Wonderful Life* with the family. Monika chose wood-look candles, which, with the faux fir garland, amplify the foresty feel.

9 CREATE CONTRAST Blend old with new, refined with rustic. Here, the juxtaposition of the copper napkin ring and fringed linen table runner with the fine linen napkin and simple white plates makes for a stunning place setting that's fitting for meals both formal and casual.

10 DRESS THE PART Just as your wardrobe changes from season to season so, too, should your decorative pieces: Trade out toss cushions that say summer for those that welcome winter.

Noble fir **CHRISTMAS TREE, FLOCKING,** David Hunter Garden Centers; **PLATES, BASKETS,** faux **TREE** (in mud room), faux fir **GARLAND** (on sideboard), sparkly pinecone **ORNAMENTS** (under glass cloche and on tree), silver **BELLS,** HomeSense; **TABLE RUNNER, NAPKINS,** glass **CLOCHE** with rope handle, bird **ORNAMENT,** silver ball **ORNAMENTS** (on dining table), The Cross Decor & Design; faux fur **TOSS CUSHION,** felt ball **GARLAND** (on coffee table), West Elm; Joy **TOSS CUSHION,** wood-look **CANDLES, NAPKIN RINGS,** Indigo; **TWINKLE LIGHTS** (on dining table), Restoration Hardware.

FOR SOURCES, SEE OUR WORKBOOK



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TEXT JENNIFER HUGHES | **PHOTOGRAPHY** STACEY BRANDFORD | **STYLING** TARA BALLANTYNE

In the quaint town of Lakefield, Ont., a shop owner celebrates the season in a subtle yet cozy way.

good tidings &

Pops of red (including the locally made red dock chair) in the otherwise crisp white entryway announce the holidays. The original banister is festooned with abundant natural greenery.

DESIGN, Stony Lake Furniture Co., stonylakefurniture.ca; Cornforth White 228 **WALL PAINT** (throughout, except dining room), Farrow & Ball; red **DOCK CHAIR, CONSOLE, RUG,** Stony Lake Furniture Co.; **HOOK RACK,** Design Within Reach; **STOCKING,** Treetopia; sheepskin **THROWS** (throughout), IKEA; **GREENERY** (throughout), The Greenhouse on the River.

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ABOVE In this entryway vignette, found moose antlers and a pine wreath sit atop a vintage dresser and set the tone for the country Christmas vibe throughout.

RIGHT The living room, with its wood-burning fireplace, is the perfect cozy spot for gathering in the winter. The spruce Christmas tree is courtesy of a friend who lives on a former tree farm.

SOFA, ARMCHAIR, COFFEE TABLE, RUG, PENDANT LIGHT, SCONCES, Stony Lake Furniture Co.; framed **PRINT,** Hazlewood Images; pinecone (on mantel) and glass ball **ORNAMENTS,** Balsam Hill.

As a designer and furniture shop owner, Lisa Besseling admits that her house has been known to fall victim to experimentation. Operating Stony Lake Furniture Co. in her hometown of Lakefield, Ont., means she has ready access to the store's comfortable and stylish furnishings and accessories. But after four years in the 2,800-square-foot house she shares with her husband, Marlon Hazlewood, and their dog, Owen, Lisa has finally settled on a look she loves. "It used to feel like everything in our home was for sale," she says. "I once even sold a sofa from under Marlon!"

LEFT Although the sunroom is the smallest space in the house, "It's definitely our favourite," says homeowner Lisa Besseling, pictured here with her husband, Marlon Hazlewood, and their dog, Owen.

Wooden stump **STOOLS, RUG,** Stony Lake Furniture Co.

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After some extensive cosmetic upgrades to the space, the style Lisa has cultivated is a modern take on country with plenty of warmth. The spare, almost Scandinavian look forms a neutral backdrop perfect for Christmastime, when she likes to keep things simple with fresh greenery punctuated by hits of red. "To be honest, I wasn't a big Christmas person before we owned this place, so I prefer a fairly minimal approach to holiday decorating," she confesses. "But the tree keeps getting bigger every year."

Hosting family gatherings is much easier after a big kitchen facelift in 2012. "Since the house was a rental for many years, the kitchen was a total nightmare. It hadn't been loved," says Lisa. Cheap cabinets and a faux terracotta floor gave way to a European-style design, with base cabinets (originally fixtures at Lisa's shop) topped with black soapstone countertops. A wall of open shelving feels fresh and modern against a Statuario

BELOW, LEFT Lisa adores the dining room's chandelier for its all-season appeal. The live-edge black walnut table was made by a local craftsman.

Lamp Room Gray 88 **WALL PAINT,** Farrow & Ball; custom **DINING TABLE,** Peter Shanks; **DINING CHAIRS, CHANDELIER,** Stony Lake Furniture Co.; **SNOWSHOES,** The Greenhouse on the River.

BELOW In the kitchen, the tidy little wood-burning stove and the exposed chimney and ductwork give the room rustic country charm.

Custom **CABINETRY, RUG, TEA TOWEL, UTENSIL HOLDER,** wooden **SPOONS, TEA CUPS,** Stony Lake Furniture Co.; **RANGE, RANGE HOOD,** Dacor; **FLOOR TILES,** Urban Zebra.

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GOLD BOND ULTIMATE

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ABOVE The sunroom's antique sled adorned with a bunch of fresh greenery is a natural wintry accent.

SLED, The Greenhouse on the River.

RIGHT In the guest room, an antique brass bed frame layered with plush patterned bedding makes a cozy retreat for holiday visitors. A few festive touches provide additional cheer.

Solid blue **DUVET SET,** ticking stripe **COMFORTER & SHAMS, RUG, FLOOR LAMP,** Stony Lake Furniture Co.; tree-patterned **SHEET SET,** HomeSense; red **THROW,** Balsam Hill.

"I PREFER A FAIRLY MINIMAL APPROACH TO HOLIDAY DECORATING."

marble subway tile backsplash. Fortunately, the renovation was squeezed into the weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas, allowing the couple to host a family holiday party.

"I've finally gotten to the point where I truly love everything and it really feels like home," says Lisa. Not that she won't continue to swap out pieces as the seasons change and the mood strikes. Luckily for her husband, though, the luxe tufted sofa is a keeper.

LEFT Lisa painted the sunroom's original cinder-block wall white and had cushions and slipcovers made for a pair of plywood storage boxes, which now act as comfy benches to curl up on. The stump stools serve as side tables or extra seating.

CHANDELIER, solid, ticking stripe, knit with buttons and oversized check **TOSS CUSHIONS,** Stony Lake Furniture Co.

FOR SOURCES, SEE OUR WORKBOOK

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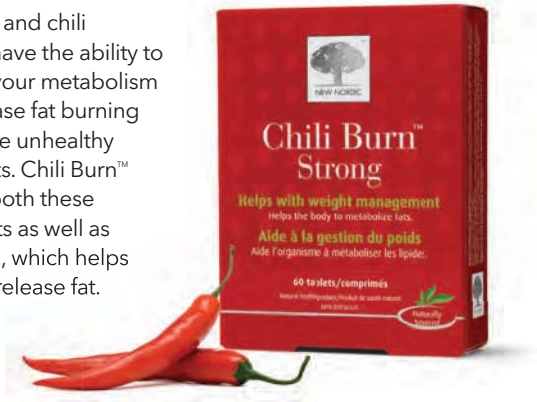

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NOVEMBER 2015

PHOTOGRAPHY, JOE KIM

FROM OUR HOMES TO YOURS

Every year, the holiday lovers among us revel in decking the halls and trimming the tree, picking out accent colours for decorations and mixing heirloom ornaments with a few new buys destined to become future favourites. Even the Scrooges inevitably feel the magic. This is, indeed, the most wonderful time of the year.

english lessons

A semi-detached home in Montreal is decked for the holidays with a designer's signature British sensibility.

TEXT CHRISTY WRIGHT

PHOTOGRAPHY MONIC RICHARD

Outside, it's a typical December day in Montreal: frigid temperatures, leaden skies and snow-covered everything.

But inside this family home, these wintry attributes are easily forgotten. Behind vibrant royal blue front doors, the space is calm and bright, and the air is filled with the sweet scent of freshly baked shortbread cookies. Any visitor would think it has always been this welcoming, but they'd be wrong.

Nicola and Matthew Marc – she's a British-born stylist, designer and co-owner of Marc Gold Interiors; he works in IT – purchased the 1915-built 3,000-square-foot house in 2013 with their growing family in mind (their daughter, Clara, is now 8, and son, Luka, is 19 months). Like any ugly duckling-to-swan transformation, the place had potential – if you looked past its peach walls, dark rooms and poky kitchen and focused on the good stuff. Nicola fell in love with the 10-foot-high ceilings and the original newel posts, crown mouldings and wide baseboards. "I imagined these elements in new surroundings that were elegant yet family friendly," she says.

Homeowner and designer Nicola Marc loves to cook and bake – especially around the holidays – so a gas cooktop and a convection oven were non-negotiable.

DESIGN, Marc Gold Interiors, marcgoldinteriors.com; **CONTRACTING,** Entrepreneur S.C. & Fils; Beauti-Tone Here Comes The Bride WB001-0 **WALL & TRIM PAINT** (throughout), Home Hardware; **WINDOWS** (throughout), Marvin Windows and Doors; **KITCHEN DESIGN,** custom **FLOATING SHELVES,** Hh À Hauteur d'Homme; **CABINETRY, CABINETRY HARDWARE,** IKEA; Call of the Loon 6183-41 **CABINETRY PAINT,** Sico Paint; **APPLIANCES,** Smeg.

OPPOSITE The banister, adorned with magnolia leaves, paper rosettes and a doily garland, captures Nicola's simple approach to holiday decor.

Mole's Breath 276 **STAIRCASE PAINT,** Farrow & Ball; **FLOORING** (throughout), Lauzon; **FLOORING INSTALLATION,** Bois Franc Lavallée; **IN-FLOOR HEATING,** Flextherm.

LEFT A contemporary chandelier adds panache to the dining room and illuminates the setting for holiday meals. "We gather here for Christmas lunch with turkey and all the trimmings, puddings and cakes," says Nicola.

CHANDELIER, Nüspace; **TABLE RUNNER** (rolled up), patterned **BOWLS,** West Elm; gold **BOWLS,** black **PITCHER,** HomeSense.

OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT Nicola's husband, Matthew, made the shelves in the dining room from planks of wood and brackets; Nicola painted them glossy blue. They sit above a bar area, arranged so guests can help themselves.

Stiffkey Blue 281 **SHELF PAINT,** Farrow & Ball; **ICE BUCKET, CANDLE HOLDER,** West Elm; **TRAYS, DECANTER,** Celadon Collection.

OPPOSITE, TOP RIGHT Nicola used grey paint to unify mismatched new and second-hand dining chairs. The artwork is framed maps of London taken from a book that belonged to her grandfather.

Charleston Gray 243 **DINING CHAIR PAINT,** Farrow & Ball.

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM LEFT The couple's two kids, Luka and Clara, help decorate the Fraser fir tree set in the living room's turret.

RUG, Dash & Albert Rug Company; **POUFFE,** HomeSense.

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM RIGHT The foyer showcases Nicola's signature mix of old and new.

Untitled **ARTWORK,** Björn Wallander; **SCONCE,** West Elm.

To conjure the look, the couple embarked on an extensive year-long overhaul, gutting the entire main floor and much of the upstairs. The kitchen saw the biggest transformation. "We annexed a bathroom adjacent to the original galley kitchen to double the kitchen's footprint and create an open-concept layout," says Nicola. "We didn't want it to feel like a typical kitchen – more like a room that complements the rest of the house." Forgoing upper cabinets for a display of artwork and adding a show-stopping custom oak shelving unit and a bright blue quartzite-topped island helped morph this vision into a reality.

Not everything was upgraded: Original radiators were sanded and painted, and the beloved trim and mouldings were carefully removed and reinstalled when the renovation was complete. The peach walls were coated in white, and spaces were energized with paint and wallpaper. Decorative flourishes pay tribute to the British homes Nicola grew up in and reflect her penchant for mixing classic and contemporary styles.

the Xmas Files

holiday decorating style

NATURAL WITH GOLD AND SILVER TOUCHES.

tree trimming tidbit

"HOST A TREE DECORATING GET-TOGETHER. IT'S A LOVELY TRADITION TO START AND A GREAT EXCUSE FOR A PARTY," SAYS NICOLA.

unexpected decor touch

FESTIVE ACCENTS IN OFT-OVERLOOKED SPACES, SUCH AS A BOWL FILLED WITH HYACINTH BULBS IN THE POWDER ROOM AND MINI CHRISTMAS TREES IN THE KIDS' ROOMS.

most cherished christmas memento

TREASURED TREE TOPPERS, INCLUDING A METAL STAR FROM MEXICO AND A VINTAGE PAPER ANGEL WITH A TISSUE SKIRT.

outdoor lighting strategy

MINIMAL – A SMALL EVERGREEN TREE IN A METAL PAIL ON THE FRONT PORCH COVERED IN WHITE LIGHTS.

it's not the holiday season until...

"WE CHOOSE THE PERFECT REAL CHRISTMAS TREE," SAYS NICOLA.

It's a sensibility that permeates the house, especially around the holidays. The Christmas tree, for example, is adorned with precious heirlooms and vintage decorations and then freshened up with modern baubles – the look is British traditional with a twist. "I love juxtaposing old and new," says Nicola. "Having inherited ornaments sit comfortably beside new finds makes the space feel like it's evolved over time." That's an important distinction, as Nicola describes her home's Italianate exterior as typical of the area, although it's obvious this place is anything but cookie cutter.

FAR LEFT & BELOW The bright blue island – equipped with wheels for easy movement when the couple entertains – livens up the kitchen's neutral tones. The custom oak shelving unit has a modern loft sensibility that plays off the simple grey-painted cabinetry. It holds everyday dishes and cookbooks, as well as Nicola's collections of vintage china and glassware.

Custom **SHELVING UNIT & ISLAND,** Hh À Hauteur d'Homme; Cook's Blue 237 **ISLAND PAINT,** Farrow & Ball; Caesarstone **PERIMETER COUNTERTOP,** quartzite **ISLAND COUNTERTOP,** Summum Granit; **SINK, FAUCET,** Blanco.

FOR SOURCES, SEE OUR WORKBOOK

A mint green vase holding white-painted branches decorated with glass balls and wooden snowflakes serves as a festive centrepiece in the craft room. The handmade paper star garland is destined for the living room.

DESIGN, Kelly Deck Design, kellydeck.com; **ARCHITECTURE,** Sunshine Coast Home Design; **CONTRACTING,** A.T. Home Construction; **GREENERY & PLANTS** (throughout), Art Knapp, The Flower Factory; mini ball and snowflake **ORNAMENTS,** Roost.

OPPOSITE Designers Nicole Mah and Kelly Deck dressed the living room mantel with candles, tiny cypress trees and paperwhites (a classic holiday flower) set among loosely placed branches.

Discus **ARTWORK,** Cissy Cook Designs; **CANDLESTICKS,** Crate and Barrel; mercury glass **VOTIVE HOLDERS,** West Elm; white glass **VOTIVE HOLDERS,** Indigo; reindeer **STOCKING HOLDERS,** Pottery Barn.

CHRISTMAS MAGIC

TEXT LAURA MUIR | **PHOTOGRAPHY** BARRY CALHOUN

In a faraway place where the nights are long and the stars shine bright, two designers work around the clock to fill a cottage with the spirit of Christmas for a very special family.

It sounds like nothing short of a Christmas miracle: arriving home during the busy holiday season to find that everything – from the tree to the table – has been decked out for Santa. And, no, not merely put together by elves but beautifully finished by real-life designers. That's what happened to the owners of this bright and airy cottage located on British Columbia's majestic Sunshine Coast.

But in this case, the homeowners, Canadian expats who live in Bermuda, admittedly knew what was coming. They enlisted Nicole Mah and Kelly Deck of Vancouver's Kelly Deck Design to decorate the house for the holidays, but gave the designers carte blanche so the decor would be a complete surprise when they arrived after a long flight. "The homeowners said, 'Surprise us,'" says Nicole, who was also the interior designer on the project when the 4,500-square-foot cottage was being built. "I've gotten to know the owners' tastes over the past three years, so it was really effortless for me to create a Christmas look that was true to their aesthetic and consistent with the style of the space."

ABOVE The cottage's clean, comfortable aesthetic and fresh, bright palette served as the jumping-off point for the laid-back natural holiday theme. In the living room, the faux Christmas tree is adorned with a simple felt ball garland and a collection of ornaments in a predominantly neutral colour scheme. "The tree trimmings range from traditional to modern," says Nicole. "We wanted the tree to look collected with a lot of different decorations. But keeping the colours consistent makes them all work together."

Oxford White CC-30 **WALL PAINT** (throughout), Benjamin Moore; custom built-in **CABINETRY** (throughout), Pacific Rim Cabinets; Rachel Ashwell **SOFAS,** Shabby Chic; custom **ARMCHAIRS,** Bari Designs; **COFFEE TABLE, RUG,** Scrabble **BOARD GAME,** Restoration Hardware; custom

ROMAN SHADES (throughout), Hartmann&Forbes; **LANTERNS** (on coffee table), Crate and Barrel; faux **CHRISTMAS TREE,** Canadian Tire; white feather **TREES,** Roost; felt ball **GARLAND,** West Elm.

RIGHT, FROM TOP White-painted branches adorned with ornaments have a Scandinavian feel; a string of felt acorns hung on a reindeer stocking holder acts as a playful accent in lieu of a stocking; the Advent calendar in the craft room was made by stamping kraft paper envelopes with the day of the month and pinning them in the shape of a Christmas tree onto a linen-upholstered cork board; the place setting boasts an earthy quality, thanks to a sprig of eucalyptus, but the designers edged the leaves in gold glitter to give the arrangement a touch of holiday sparkle.

FESTIVE FACTOR

QUIET HOLIDAY MOMENTS SPEAK JUST AS LOUDLY AS BOLD, OVER-THE-TOP ONES – THE KEY IS TO KEEP IT SIMPLE AND STICK TO A COLOUR SCHEME.

The kitchen's large eat-in area boasts comfortable slipcovered chairs, a generous banquette and breathtaking views. A palette of white, pale aqua and earthy beige tones gives the holiday table setting a modern look and ties in with the rest of the home.

Custom **DINING TABLE, DINING CHAIRS,** Once a Tree Furniture; **PENDANT LIGHT,** Circa Lighting; aqua **DINNER PLATES,** gold fig **VASES,** The Cross Decor & Design; white **SALAD PLATES,** The Seasoned Kitchen; **NAPKINS,** Smith Handmade; white cut-out **POTS,** Crate and Barrel.

the Xmas Files

holiday decorating style

NATURAL ELEMENTS PAIRED WITH SUPER-CHIC SILVER AND GOLD AND HINTS OF SOFT BLUE AND GREEN.

tree trimming tidbit

GET EVERYONE INVOLVED, AND HAVE FUN WITH IT – PLAY FESTIVE MUSIC AND SERVE YUMMY SNACKS.

unexpected decor touch

THE DIY ADVENT CALENDAR MADE OUT OF KRAFT PAPER BAGS (FILLED WITH CHOCOLATES) ARRANGED IN THE SHAPE OF A CHRISTMAS TREE.

most cherished christmas memento

THE FAMILY'S COLLECTION OF CHRISTMAS CARDS FROM FRIENDS AND RELATIVES.

outdoor lighting strategy

SOFT WHITE LIGHTS LINING THE ROOF, WINDOWS AND TREES.

it's not the holiday season until...

THE CHRISTMAS TREE IS ERECTED. "WE PREFER A REAL TREE, BUT AN ARTIFICAL ONE IS MUCH MORE PRACTICAL FOR A COTTAGE," SAYS ONE OF THE HOMEOWNERS.

Using the cottage's subdued colour scheme – inspired by sea glass from the beaches of Bermuda – and its contemporary, comfortable vibe as the starting point, Nicole and Kelly focused on a natural theme to keep things simple and fresh and in line with the coastal setting. "We wanted to create a playful, modern interpretation of the classic Christmas look so it would reflect the style of the rest of the house," says Nicole.

Whether store-bought or DIY, the decorations offer a handmade feel that's both whimsical and cozy. Organic elements and greenery like the white-painted branches, eucalyptus sprigs and potted paperwhites enhance the modern, fresh approach. A bit of essential Christmas sparkle and shine was incorporated via ornaments and accessories, which adhere to the colour scheme of white, gold, silver and soft blues and greens.

While the designers ensured the holiday decor suited the cottage's casual style, they also wanted it to be practical, so they picked a few artificial pieces like the Christmas tree in the living room and the staircase garland to make it a bit easier for these offshore homeowners. "We chose items they could easily store and then bring out and reuse every year," says Nicole.

Giving the family their privacy, Nicole and Kelly were away for the big reveal, but with the presents under the tree, the table set for dinner and even a game of Scrabble displayed on the coffee table – "They love to play board games together," says Nicole – it's safe to say these homeowners experienced the magic of Christmas as soon as they walked in the front door.

TOP The craft room takes the place of a home office and provides a spot for the family to indulge their love of DIYs.

Schumacher **WALLPAPER,** AnneStarr; **DESK, DESK CHAIRS,** Pottery Barn; **SEAT CUSHION FABRIC,** Caitlin Wilson Textiles.

ABOVE "We didn't want anything to take away from the beautiful turquoise door," says Nicole. So the designers strung a simple wood-disc garland that says "Merry Christmas" along the transom window.

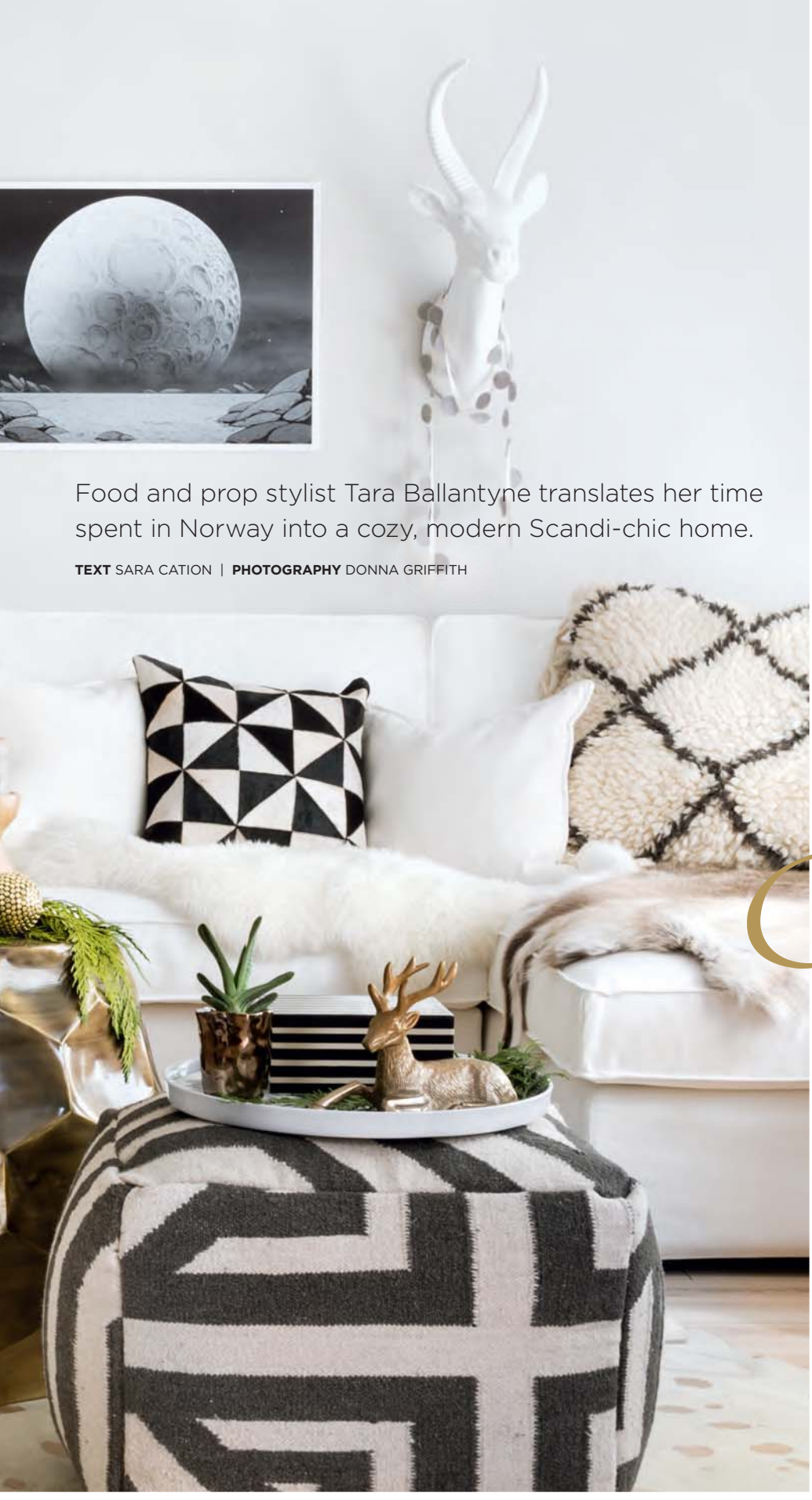
Blue Ground 210 **FRONT DOOR PAINT,** Farrow & Ball.

RIGHT In the grand entryway, the banisters are decorated with faux evergreen garland embellished with pretty bows and delicate acorn and snowflake ornaments.

CONSOLE, Stanley Furniture; **GARLAND,** IKEA; acorn and snowflake **ORNAMENTS,** Roost.

FOR SOURCES, SEE OUR WORKBOOK

THE NORSE POLE



Food and prop stylist Tara Ballantyne translates her time spent in Norway into a cozy, modern Scandi-chic home.

TEXT SARA CATION | **PHOTOGRAPHY** DONNA GRIFFITH

LEFT When the holidays hit, homeowner Tara Ballantyne elevates her simple white, grey, brown and black palette with metallics like silver and gold. "I'm always trying new looks and trends for my work as a stylist, and because I think in colour so much for my job, I like to come home to a muted environment," says Tara.

Barley Beige 30YY 68/024 **WALL PAINT** (throughout), CIL Paint; **SECTIONAL** (arms removed), sheepskin **THROWS,** white **TOSS CUSHIONS,** IKEA; **SIDE TABLE, OTTOMAN,** gold-speckled hide **TOSS CUSHION,** black & white **TOSS CUSHION,** Moroccan berber-style **TOSS CUSHION,** HomeSense; cowhide **RUG,** hide **THROW,** deer **FIGURINES,** gold ball **ORNAMENT** (on side table), potted succulent **PLANT,** Black Rooster Decor; *Moon* **ARTWORK,** Branko Vranic; black & white **LUMBAR CUSHION,** CB2; balsam fir **CHRISTMAS TREE,** Benjamin Tree Farm; **GREENERY** (on side table), Living Fresh; gold ball **ORNAMENTS** (on tree), Balsam Hill.

It was love at first sight. "I had been working in the world of interiors for a while," says stylist, on-air expert for *The Marilyn Denis Show* and homeowner Tara Ballantyne of finding her muse. "But when I arrived in Norway, I thought, 'This is it! *This* is my style.'" Tara lived there on and off for three years while her husband, Paul, played professional hockey. And although the couple returned to Canada nearly five years ago, in terms of style, Tara never really left.

"One hundred percent of my decor is inspired by Scandinavia," says Tara of the 1,700-square-foot open-concept house in Waterloo, Ont., that she shares with Paul and their two-year-old twins, Archer and Basil. From the light and airy muted palette to the modern furnishings to the layers of faux fur and handcrafted touches, Tara brought her favourite features of Norwegian style home with her, both figuratively and literally. "I didn't want to ship a lot home, so I packed the smaller items in my luggage…and a surplus of stools," says Tara with a laugh. "I could fit them in a hockey bag." →

Tara transformed a fallen birch branch into an unexpected Advent calendar. Attached are small gifts like blocks and tiny toys, as well as atypical items like a mini tin of maple syrup. "On the day the boys unwrap the syrup, I'll make them pancakes for breakfast," says Tara.

Honeycomb **CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS,** IKEA.

ABOVE Tara and her husband, Paul, sit with the Ballantyne boys, Archer and Basil, who adore their teepee (a gift from Grandma) so much that they use it for both playing (nice!) and hiding (naughty!).

TEEPEE, House Inhabit; grey **POUFFE,** EQ3; banana fibre **FOOTSTOOLS,** IKEA.

BELOW, LEFT & RIGHT Handmade details define Tara's style, from the felt pinecone gift toppers to the heart-shaped tree ornament. Nothing here is overly Christmasy – even the garland. "I wear it as a neck-lace, too," she says, ever thinking outside the holiday box.

the Xmas Files

holiday decorating style

A PALETTE OF WHITE, WOOD AND NATURAL MATERIALS.

tree trimming tidbit

MAKE YOUR OWN ORNAMENTS OR BUY UNIQUE HANDMADE ONES FROM SPECIAL PLACES LIKE A CHRISTMAS MARKET OR CRAFT FAIR – THAT WAY, THERE'S A STORY FOR EVERY ORNAMENT, AND TREE TRIMMING IS LIKE OPENING A BOX OF MEMORIES!

unexpected decor touch

THE DIY ADVENT CALENDARS. ONE IS MADE WITH CANDLES AND THE OTHER WITH GIFTS HANGING FROM A BIRCH BRANCH.

most cherished christmas memento

A HAND-CARVED WOODEN ORNAMENT THAT WAS PURCHASED AT AN OPEN-AIR CHRISTMAS MARKET IN NORWAY. "EVERY YEAR, WHEN I UNPACK IT, I'M IMMEDIATELY TRANSPORTED BACK TO OUR TIME LIVING THERE," SAYS TARA.

outdoor lighting strategy

WHITE PAPER STARS IN THE FRONT WINDOWS AND SIMPLE WHITE TWINKLE LIGHTS ALONG THE EAVES AND AROUND SOME WINDOWS.

it's not the holiday season until...

"WE WATCH *NATIONAL LAMPOON'S CHRISTMAS VACATION* ON DECEMBER 1," SAYS TARA WITH A LAUGH.

Tara introduced pops of black to her home's palette around the same time her twins arrived. "It allowed me to use more patterned black and white fabrics," she says, "which are not only more rock 'n' roll, but also better at hiding mess."

SETTEE, West Elm; Wishbone **DINING CHAIRS,** Eames **END CHAIR,** Design Within Reach; **BOOKSHELVES** (customized with black paper), **STEPSTOOL, PHOTO LEDGE,** sheepskin **THROWS, TOSS CUSHIONS, FRAMES,** IKEA; **RUG,** gold ombré **VASE,** HomeSense; screen-printed wooden tree **SCULPTURES,** BRFC/Bearface Design; **ADVENT CANDLE HOLDER, CANDLES,** Stony Lake Furniture Co.; gold ball **ORNAMENTS,** Black Rooster Decor.

LEFT, FROM TOP The bust of a waterbuck ram (a nod to Tara's South African heritage) gets gussied up with some handmade felt garlands; you'd never guess that this ornament was a simple project made with felt circles and a glue gun; covered in two-toned yarn, this wreath is multi-seasonal – the felt flowers can be repositioned or swapped out to suit any occasion; when shopping for wrapping paper, Tara grabs a basket, picks all the prints she loves and then takes a step back and assesses which are too similar and which don't match, whittling the choices down to three or four papers – "I also hit end-of-season sales and select patterns that work for other holidays, too," she says.

The kitchen's Tolix-inspired stools were, however, purchased here, as were all of Tara's main Mid-Century Modern furnishings. The moulded plastic Eames chairs are perfect for kids, says Tara, but the Wishbone dining chairs are another story. "I chose them in a waxed-wood finish instead of a painted one – and in the lightest colour," she says, "so they stain easily." Tara drapes them in inexpensive throws when she's worried about who's sitting there; and she does the same for the living room's white sectional. "Obviously, when I picked everything in white, I wasn't thinking about kids," she says. "I was just thinking that I love white."

When Tara gave birth to her boys, her friends bet that she'd overhaul all that white, but Tara just adapted. She relies on wipeable or slipcovered furniture and ample toss cushions and blankets to hide any stains. "I was worried that I was going to lose bits of myself with the influx of kids' stuff. I still wanted my home to be a reflection of me," she says – so the light colours stayed.

Tara maintains the same scheme and design principles when decorating for the holidays. "Norwegians place a huge focus on artisans and crafts," she says, explaining the inspiration for her own projects, including the Advent calendar, garlands, present toppers and ornaments she fashioned out of felt. A light palette, layers of blankets and furs, paper star lanterns and candles are also typical. "It's so dark in Norway at this time of year – the sun goes down by 3 p.m. – but people still sit outside, covered in furs, to enjoy their coffee," she says. "When you look inside their homes and everything is so warm and bright, it's truly magical." How wonderful that she recreated that magic here.

CRAFTY CREATIONS

BREAK OUT YOUR FELT, YARN AND GLUE, AND GET CRAFTING! TO FIND OUT HOW TO MAKE TARA'S SCANDI-CHIC HOLIDAY DECORATIONS, VISIT **STYLEATHOME.COM/FELT.**

FOR SOURCES, SEE OUR WORKBOOK

RECIPES & FOOD STYLING CLAIRE STUBBS

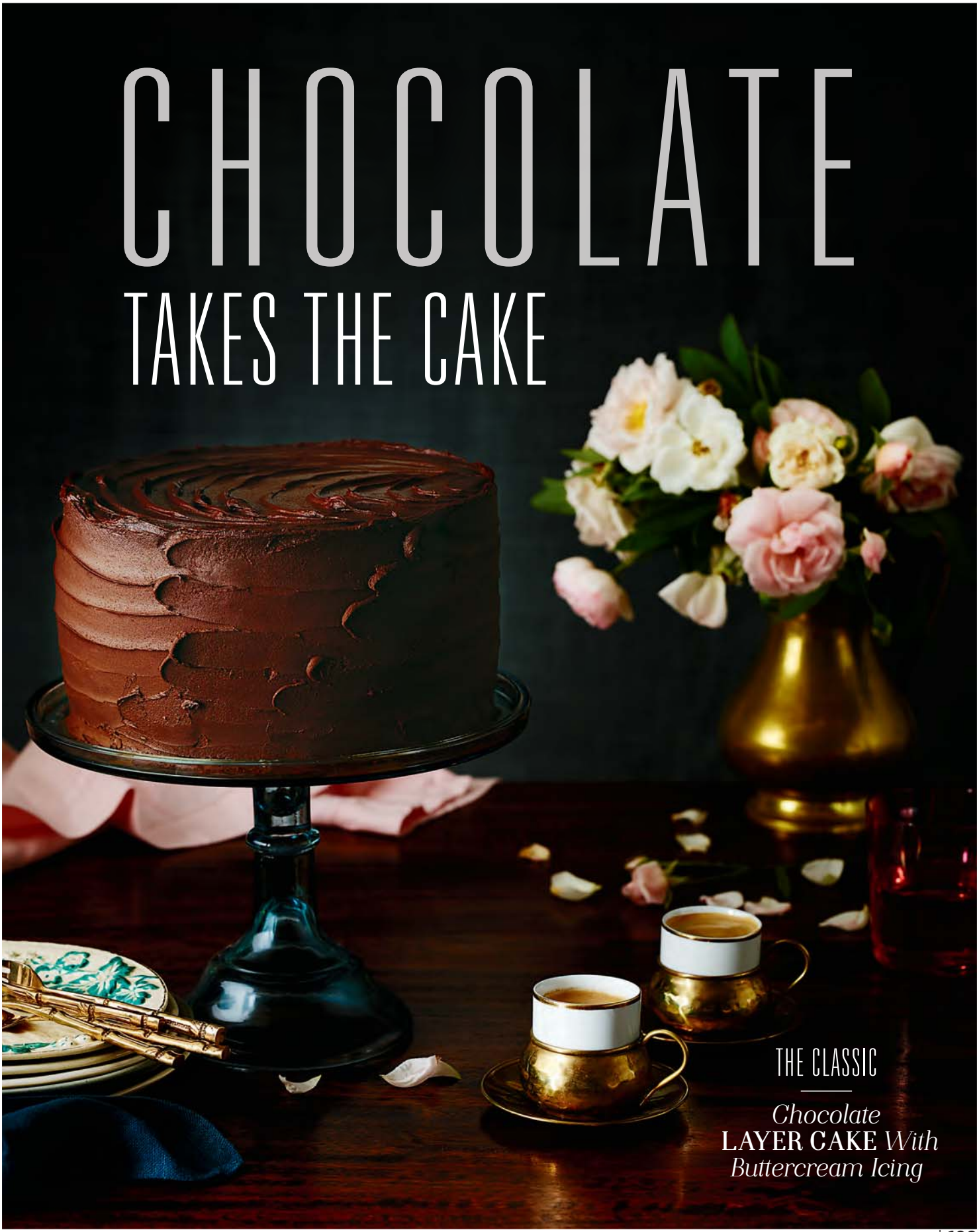
PHOTOGRAPHY MAYA VISNYEI

PROP STYLING ANN MARIE FAVOT

Cakes come in all kinds of shapes, colours and flavours, but at *Style at Home* we believe that nothing beats a first-class pure and simple chocolate confection. And since the holidays are synonymous with chocolate, we're serving up recipes for our favourite gateaux to celebrate the season.

TRANSFERWARE PLATE, PUTTI FINE FURNISHINGS, PUTTI.CA; GLASSES, VILLEROY & BOCH, VILLEROY-BOCH.CA; NAPKIN, WEST ELM, WESTELM.COM; RIBBON, MOKUBA, 416-504-5358

CHOCOLATE
TAKES THE CAKE



THE CLASSIC

Chocolate **LAYER CAKE** *With Buttercream Icing*

PINK GLASS, CB2, CB2.CA; MAJOLICA PLATE, PUTTI FINE FURNISHINGS, PUTTI.CA

CHOCOLATE ROLL WITH CHOCOLATE MOUSSE & TOFFEE

PREP & COOK TIME **1 HOUR** | SERVES **8**

Cake

- 6 large organic free-range eggs, separated
- ⅔ cup superfine or caster sugar, divided
- 2 tsp pure vanilla extract
- ¼ cup cake and pastry flour
- ¼ cup + 3 tbsp cocoa powder, divided
- ½ tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp baking soda

Chocolate Mousse

- 2 tbsp icing sugar
- 2 tbsp cocoa powder
- 1 cup 35% cream
- 4 oz dark chocolate, melted and cooled
- ½ cup toffee bits

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Grease an 11" x 15" rimmed baking sheet and line with parchment paper. In a large bowl, beat the egg whites with an electric hand mixer until soft peaks form. Add half of the sugar, a tablespoon at a time, beating well until the egg whites are glossy and stiff peaks form; set aside. In another bowl, beat the egg yolks with the remaining sugar and the vanilla until pale and fluffy, about 4 minutes.

Sift together the flour and ¼ cup of the cocoa powder, the baking powder and baking soda. Sift half the flour mixture over the yolk mixture and stir to combine. Gently fold in half of the egg whites, being careful they don't deflate. Add the remaining flour mixture, stirring to combine, followed by the remaining egg whites, folding in just until they're no longer streaky. Gently pour the batter onto the prepared baking sheet, smoothing the top with an offset spatula. Bake on the centre rack of the oven until the cake is just dry to the touch, 10 to 12 minutes. Be careful not to overbake the cake, or it will crack when it's rolled.

Sprinkle the top of the cake with 1½ tablespoons of the remaining cocoa powder. Run a knife along the sides of the cake to release the edges, cover the cake with a clean dry tea towel and gently invert the cake onto the towel on a countertop. Carefully peel away the parchment paper. Dust the cake with the remaining cocoa powder. Roll up the cake from the short end like a tight pinwheel, with the tea towel inside, and let cool for 20 minutes while preparing the mousse.

To make the mousse, sift together the icing sugar and cocoa powder in a small bowl; set aside. Whip the cream in a medium bowl with an electric hand mixer until just thickened; sprinkle the surface with the sifted icing sugar and cocoa and whip until thick. Add the melted chocolate and stir until combined.

Unroll the cake and remove the tea towel. Spread the mousse over the cake, leaving a 1" border. Sprinkle the mousse with the toffee bits and gently re-roll the cake. Wrap the cake in plastic wrap and place, seam side down, on a baking sheet. Refrigerate until the filling is set, 2 to 3 hours. Remove the plastic and slice the cake to serve.

THE LIGHTWEIGHT

CHOCOLATE ROLL
With Chocolate Mousse & Toffee

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CHOCOLATE SOUR CREAM BUNDT CAKE

PREP & COOK TIME **1¼ HOURS** | SERVES **10 to 12**

Cake

- 1 cup unsalted butter
- ¾ cup 2% milk
- ½ cup cocoa powder
- ½ tsp kosher salt
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ cups granulated sugar
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 2 large organic free-range eggs
- ½ cup sour cream
- 2 tsp pure vanilla extract

Glaze

- 4 oz bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped
- ½ cup 35% cream
- 1 tbsp corn syrup
- ¼ cup chocolate shavings (optional)

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly grease and flour a 10-cup Bundt pan. Combine the butter, milk, cocoa and salt in a small saucepan over medium heat. Whisk until the butter is just melted; remove from the heat and allow the mixture to cool slightly.

Sift together the flour, sugar and baking soda in a large bowl. Add the melted butter mixture, stirring to combine. Add the eggs, one at a time, stirring to combine. Add the sour cream and vanilla and stir until smooth.

Scrape the batter into the prepared Bundt pan. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the centre of the cake comes out clean. Let the cake cool for 10 minutes in the pan before inverting on a cake plate to cool completely.

While the cake is cooling, make the glaze. Place the chocolate in a heatproof bowl. Heat the cream in a small saucepan over medium heat until just under a boil. Pour the cream over the chocolate and let sit for 5 minutes, without stirring, to allow the chocolate to gently melt. Using a rubber spatula, stir together the cream and chocolate until the mixture is smooth and glossy. Stir in the corn syrup. Drizzle the glaze over the Bundt cake and sprinkle the top with the chocolate shavings.

Let the cake sit for 30 minutes to allow the glaze to set before serving.

THE REIMAGINED

Chocolate Sour Cream BUNDT CAKE

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CHOCOLATE HAZELNUT FUDGE CAKE WITH GANACHE

PREP & COOK TIME **1 HOUR** | SERVES **10 TO 12**

Cake

- 4 oz toasted hazelnuts
- 8 oz dark chocolate, chopped
- ½ cup + 2 tbsp unsalted butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 5 large organic free-range eggs, separated

Ganache

- 4 oz dark chocolate, finely chopped
- ½ cup 35% cream
- Cocoa powder for dusting (optional)

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 9" springform pan and line with parchment paper on the base and up the sides.

Grind the nuts in a food processor until they are a fine, even crumb; set aside. Place the chocolate and butter in a heatproof bowl over a pot of barely simmering water. Stir occasionally until the chocolate is melted and the mixture is silky and smooth; remove from the heat.

Stir the brown sugar and ground hazelnuts into the chocolate and butter mixture. Add the egg yolks, one at a time, stirring well after each addition. Beat the egg whites with an electric hand mixer until stiff peaks form. Gently fold the egg whites into the chocolate mixture, being careful they don't deflate. Scrape the mixture into the prepared pan and bake on the middle rack of the oven until the cake is crisp on the top, about 45 minutes. Allow the cake to cool completely in the pan before removing the ring. Gently unmould the cake onto a serving plate and carefully peel away the parchment paper.

To make the ganache, place the chopped chocolate in a heatproof bowl. Heat the cream in a small saucepan over medium heat until just simmering. Pour the cream over the chocolate and let sit for 5 minutes, without stirring, to allow the chocolate to gently melt. Using a rubber spatula, gently stir together the cream and chocolate until the mixture is smooth and glossy. Pour the ganache over the cake, letting it run down the sides. Let the cake stand at room temperature for about 30 minutes to allow the ganache to set. If desired, decorate the top of the cake with a patterned dusting of cocoa powder before slicing into wedges; serve.

THE DECADENT

Chocolate Hazelnut
FUDGE CAKE
With Ganache

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CHOCOLATE LAYER CAKE WITH BUTTERCREAM ICING

PREP & COOK TIME **2 HOURS** | SERVES **10 TO 12**

Cake

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup cocoa powder
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp baking soda
- 1 cup unsalted butter
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 3 large organic free-range eggs
- 2 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 1½ cups buttermilk
- ½ cup vegetable oil

Icing

- ½ cup cocoa powder
- ¼ cup hot espresso
- 2 tbsp coffee liqueur
- 1 cup unsalted butter
- 2½ cups icing sugar
- 8 oz semi-sweet chocolate, melted

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Butter two 8" round cake pans and line the bottoms with parchment paper. In a large bowl, sift together the flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and baking soda; set aside. Using an electric stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat together the butter and sugars until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Scrape down the batter from the sides of the bowl and beat in the eggs, one at a time, until completely combined. Beat in the vanilla extract.

Stir together the buttermilk and vegetable oil in a medium bowl. Add the dry ingredients to the butter mixture in three additions, alternating with the wet ingredients, and beating until just combined after each addition. Divide the batter evenly between the cake pans, smoothing the tops with an offset spatula. Bake on the centre rack of the oven until the cakes are set in the centre, 35 to 40 minutes. Allow the cakes to cool in the pans for about 15 minutes before turning them out onto a wire rack, removing the parchment paper and allowing them to cool completely.

Meanwhile, make the icing. Whisk together the cocoa powder, espresso and coffee liqueur until smooth; set aside to cool completely. Using an electric stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat the butter until light and fluffy. Whisk the espresso mixture into the butter in three additions, alternating with the icing sugar, and beating until combined after each addition. Fold in the melted chocolate.

Cut each cake in half horizontally using a serrated knife. Place one layer cut side up on a cake plate and spread to the edges with about ½ cup of the buttercream. Cover with a cake layer cut side down. Spread with another ½ cup buttercream. Repeat with the other two layers. Lightly spread the top and sides of the cake with a thick crumb coat of buttercream and refrigerate until set, about 30 minutes. Ice the cake with the remaining buttercream and chill until set, about 30 minutes, before serving.

feel All-Bran new*

Fibre-Rich Chili Recipe

Ingredients

1 lb lean ground beef
1 large onion
2 medium green peppers
1 can tomatoes
1 can tomato sauce
4 tsp chili powder
1/4 tsp garlic powder
1/4 tsp salt
1/8 tsp pepper
1 can red kidney beans
1 cup All-Bran Buds or All-Bran Original* cereal*

Directions

In a large, heavy saucepan, cook beef with onion and green pepper until meat is brown, stirring frequently. Drain off any fat. Break tomatoes into chunks and add to saucepan. Stir in tomato sauce, chili powder, garlic powder, salt and pepper until well mixed. Stir in beans and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer uncovered for 40 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in All-Bran Buds or All-Bran Original* cereal and cook for 10 minutes longer, stirring frequently.*

See what else is in the box at allbran.ca

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A Blogger Christmas FROM PAGE 47

MANTEL (with legs), The Home Depot, homedepot.ca; balsam fir **CHRISTMAS TREE,** IKEA, ikea.ca; **GREENERY,** Sheridan Nurseries, sheridannurseries.com.

Elegantly Eclectic

DESIGN, Bijou & Boheme, christinedovey.com; Stucco **WALLPAPER,** Wall&Decò, wallanddeco.com; **CHAIR,** hide **RUG,** gold & black **TOSS CUSHION, TREE SKIRT,** Black Rooster Decor, blackroosterdecor.com; **COFFEE TABLE,** Patina Antiques, patinaantiques.ca; **RUG,** gold **TOSS CUSHION,** Elte, elte.com; *Paper Hat* **ARTWORK** by Ulrich Knoblauch, TheseFineWalls, thesefinewalls.com; **MIRROR,** Anthropologie, anthropologie.com; **FLOOR LAMP,** Morba, morba.ca; black & white **TOSS CUSHION,** Alexandra D. Foster, alexandradfoster.com; **FLOWERS,** Fiori Oakville, fiorioakville.com; **PRINTS** (used for wrapping paper), Nicole Cohen, nicolecohenart.com; **RIBBON,** Mokuba, 416-504-5358; Kate Spade New York black & white striped **ORNAMENTS,** Lenox, lenox.com; white and gold ball **ORNAMENTS** (customized), Canadian Tire, canadiantire.ca; pinecone and spear **ORNAMENTS,** Sheridan Nurseries, sheridannurseries.com.

Refined Rustic

DESIGN, Rambling Renovators, ramblingrenovators.ca; **ARMCHAIR, RUG,** Crate and Barrel, crateandbarrel.ca; **SIDE TABLE, THROW,** deer and moose **SCULPTURES,** Urban Barn, urbanbarn.com; orb **LIGHTS,** Pottery Barn, potterybarn.com; wire **BASKET,** silver **URN,** HomeSense, homesense.ca; wood-grain and pine tree **WRAPPING PAPER,** Paperboy, paperboyparty.com; faux fur **POMPOMS** (on wreath), **RIBBON,** Mokuba, 416-504-5358; cotton **BAGS** (for Advent calendar garland), Creative Bag, creativebag.com; white faux fur and silver glitter ball **ORNAMENTS,** Rona Home & Garden, rona.ca.

Beautifully Bold

DESIGN, Design Maze, designmaze-tim.blogspot.ca; Sandberg Raphaël **WALLPAPER** in Dark Blue, Örling & Wu, orlingandwu.com; **ARMCHAIR, STOOL,** Sarah Richardson Design, sarahrichardsondesign.com; **STOOL FABRIC,** through designers, Robert Allen, robertallendesign.com; **SIDE TABLE,** Avenue Road, avenue-road.com; **TRAY TABLE,** Jonathan Adler, jonathanadler.com; **RUG,** blue **VASE,** glass **VOTIVE HOLDERS,** HomeSense, homesense.ca; pineapple and black & white **PRINTS,** The Aestate, shoptheaestate.com; **FRAMES,** IKEA, ikea.ca; parrot **SCULPTURE, TREE SKIRT,** star **TREE TOPPER,** Black Rooster Decor, blackroosterdecor.com; **CANDLESTICKS,** Vintage Fine Objects, vintagefineobjects.com; white pillar **CANDLES,** Pottery Barn, potterybarn.com; **BOOKS,** Indigo, indigo.ca; brass **BOTTLE OPENER** (on books), Mjölk, mjolk.ca; **FLOWERS,** Pistil Flowers, pistilflowers.com; **WRAPPING PAPER,** Drake General Store, drakegeneralstore.ca; **RIBBON, TASSELS** (on gifts), Mokuba, 416-504-5358; blue ball **ORNAMENTS,** The Home Depot, homedepot.ca; Kate Spade New York white ball Fa-La-La **ORNAMENTS,** Lenox, lenox.com; felt bird **ORNAMENTS,** Pi'lo, pilo.ca.

PHOTOGRAPHY, STACEY BRANDFORD

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Björn Wallander
bjornwallander.com

Black Rooster Decor
blackroosterdecor.com

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Bois Franc Lavallée
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Branko Vranic
brankovranic.com

BRFC/Bearface Design
bearface.ca

C

Caitlin Wilson Textiles
caitlinwilsontextiles.com

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celadoncollection.com

CIL Paint
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Circa Lighting
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Creekside Tile
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The Cross Decor & Design
thecrossdesign.com

The Curated House by Sarah Walker
thecuratedhouse.com

D

Dacor
dacor.com

Dash & Albert Rug Company
dashandalbert.com

David Hunter Garden Centers
davidhuntergarden-centers.com

Delta Faucet
deltafaucet.ca

Design Within Reach
dwr.com

E

Entrepreneur S.C. & Fils
scfils.com

EQ3
eq3.com

F

Farrow & Ball
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Flextherm
flextherm.com

The Flower Factory
flowerfactory.ca

G

Grapevine Designs
grapevinedesigns.ca

The Greenhouse on the River
greenhouseontheriver.com

H

Hartmann&Forbes
hartmannforbes.com

Hazlewood Images
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Hh À Hauteur d'Homme
hh.ca

The Home Depot
homedepot.ca

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homesense.ca

House Inhabit
houseinhabit.etsy.com

I

IKEA
ikea.ca

Indigo
indigo.ca

K

Kelly Deck Design
kellydeck.com

Kravet Canada*
kravetcanada.com

L

Lauzon
lauzonflooring.com

Living Fresh
livingfresh.ca

M

Marc Gold Interiors
marcgoldinteriors.com

Marvin Windows and Doors
marvin.com

Metrie
metrie.com

N

Norburn Lighting & Bath Centre
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Nüspace
nuspace.ca

O

Old World Kitchens & Custom Cabinets
oldworldkitchens.com

Once a Tree Furniture
onceatreefurniture.com

P

Pacific Rim Cabinets
pacrimcab.com

Peter Shanks
petershanksdesign.com

Pottery Barn
potterybarn.com

R

Restoration Hardware
rh.com

Roost*
roostco.com

S

Samsung
samsung.com

Shabby Chic
shabbychic.com

The Seasoned Kitchen
theseasonedkitchen.ca

Sico Paint
sico.ca

Silestone
silestoneusa.com

Smeg
smeg.com

Smith Handmade
smithhandmade.etsy.com

Stanley Furniture*
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Summum Granit
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Sunshine Coast Home Design
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T

Toofifteen
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U

Upper Canada Specialty Hardware
ucsh.com

Urban Zebra
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W

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westelm.com

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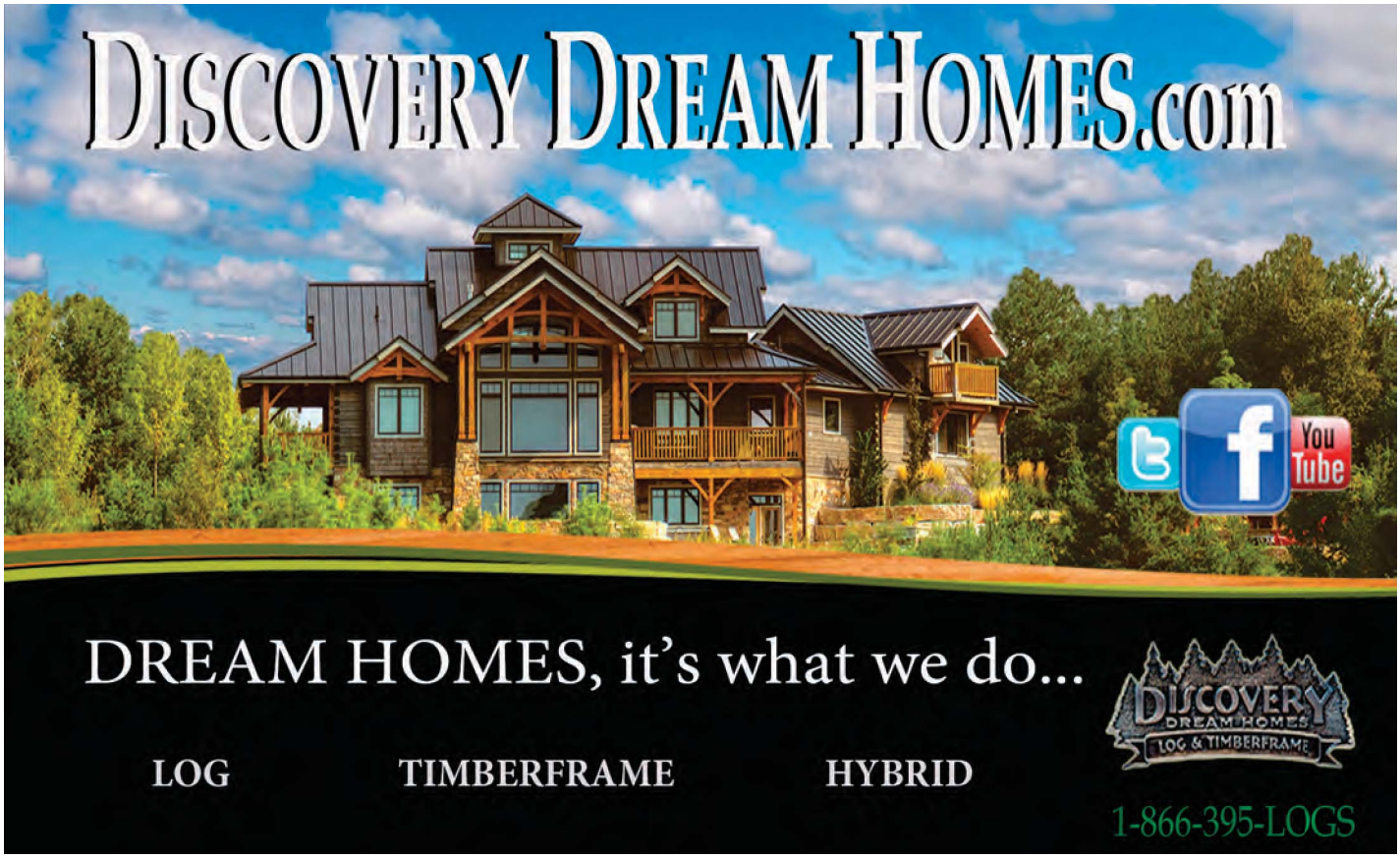

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73 ♥ 7

Natural elements, plush textures and sparkly adornments combine to reflect the warmth of the season.

PHOTOGRAPHY RYAN BROOK

139 ♥ 8

A simple staircase turns serene when bedecked with a boxwood garland, twinkle lights and stockings.

PHOTOGRAPHY STACEY VAN BERKEL

74 ♥ 6

Fresh greenery coupled with a vibrant display of clementines makes this traditional kitchen magical.

PHOTOGRAPHY DONNA GRIFFITH

design pinspiration

We round up our favourite holiday decor images from our Pinterest boards for extra inspiration.

43 ♥ 5

From the hits of fuchsia to the mercury glass candlesticks, this modern holiday vignette is utterly radiant.

PHOTOGRAPHY DONNA GRIFFITH

38 ♥ 5

It's always a satisfying sight when a room's seasonal accents blend seamlessly with the existing scheme.

PHOTOGRAPHY VIRGINIA MACDONALD

74 ♥ 11

We'll be dreaming of a white and whimsical Christmas all winter thanks to this dining room's festive decor.

PHOTOGRAPHY JAMIE LAUREN

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